THE TRANSFORMERS
ROBOTS IN DISGUISE
VOLUME 5

# THE TRANSFORMERS

## ROBOTS IN DISGUISE

VOLUME 5

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Special thanks to Hasbro's Clint Chapman, Jerry Jivoin, Joshua Lamb, Ed Lane, Joe Furfaro, Heather Hopkins, and Michael Kelly for their invaluable assistance.

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ISBN: 9781623024499 DIGITAL

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Originally published as THE TRANSFORMERS: ROBOTS IN DISGUISE Issues #17-22.

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□ ROBOTS IN DISGUISE #17 COVER A

by **LIVIO RAMONDELLI**

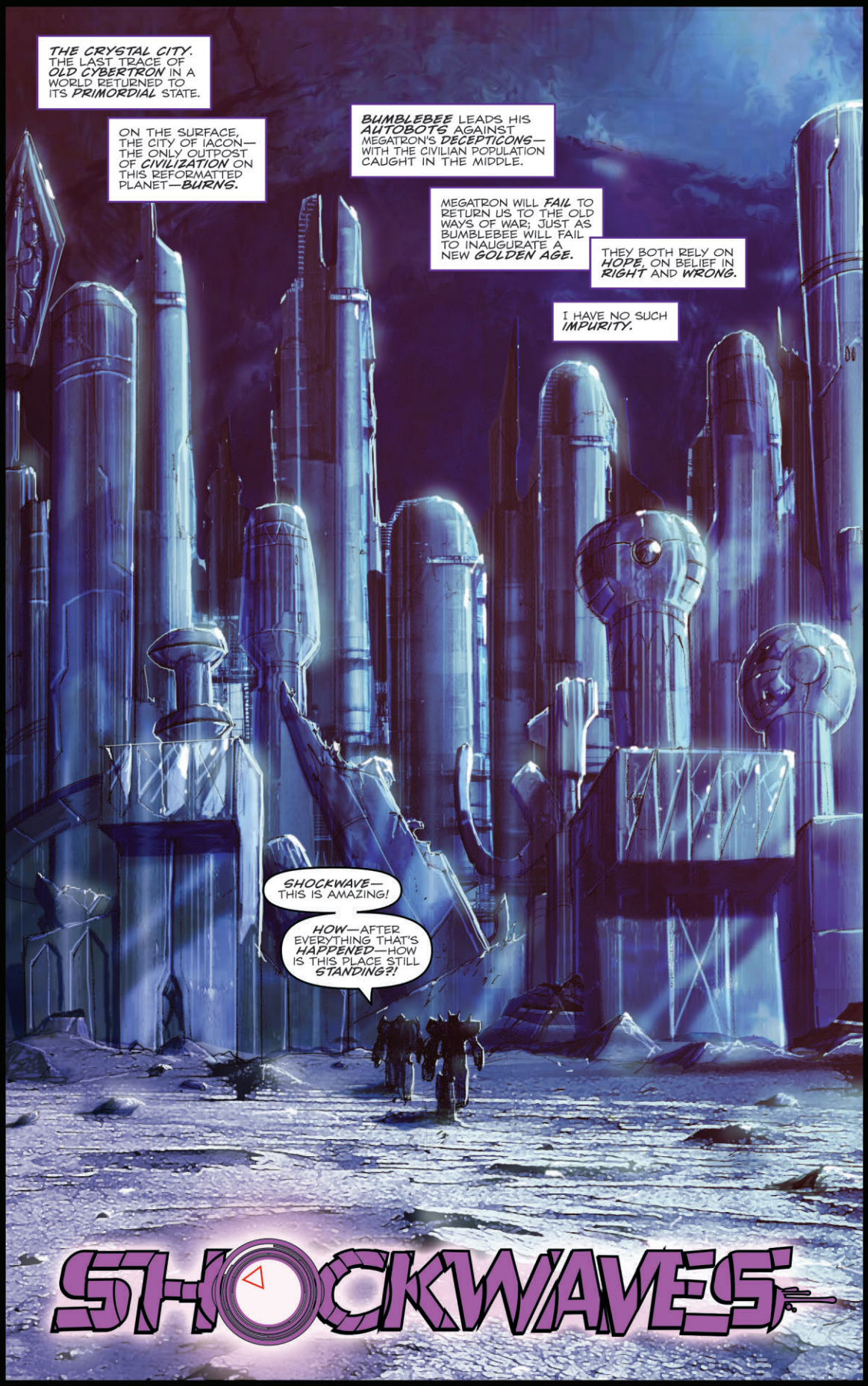
WHAT ARE WE DOIN' OUT HERE?! WHY'D YOU DRAG ME AWAY FROM THE FIGHT?!
THIS MIGHT BE OUR GREATEST VICTORY, SHOCKWAVE!

THEY NEED ALL OF US DECEPTICONS BACK IN THE CITY, BLASTIN' AUTOBOTS!
THE CITY OF IACON WILL FEND FOR ITSELF, DREADWING.

MEGATRON AND HIS FORCES WILL FAIL, AS THEY ALWAYS DO.
AND WE HAVE BUSINESS HERE.
WHAT'RE WE GONNA FIND IN THE WILDS OF CYBERTRON??
NOT IN THE WILDERNESS...

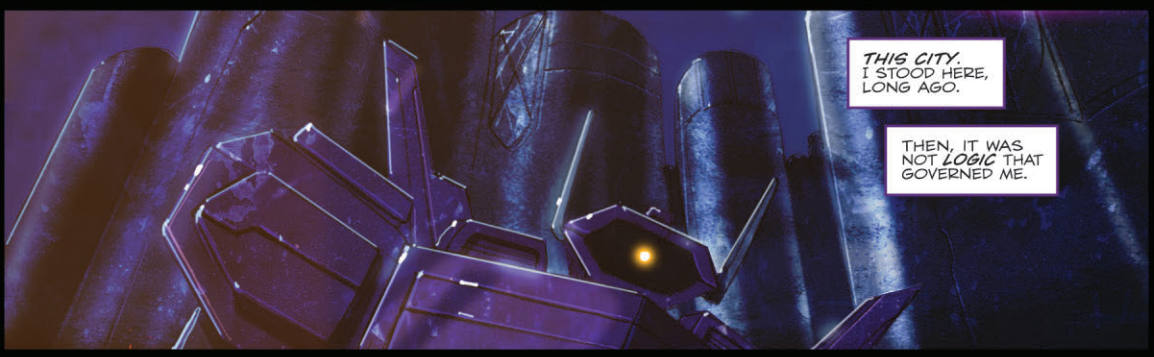
...UNDER IT.
BUT— BUT THIS WAS DESTROYED WEEKS AGO, WHEN METROTITAN SHOWED UP AND... UH... MADE EVERYTHING EXPLODE.
WHEN YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED ALL I HAVE, DREADWING, YOU LEARN...

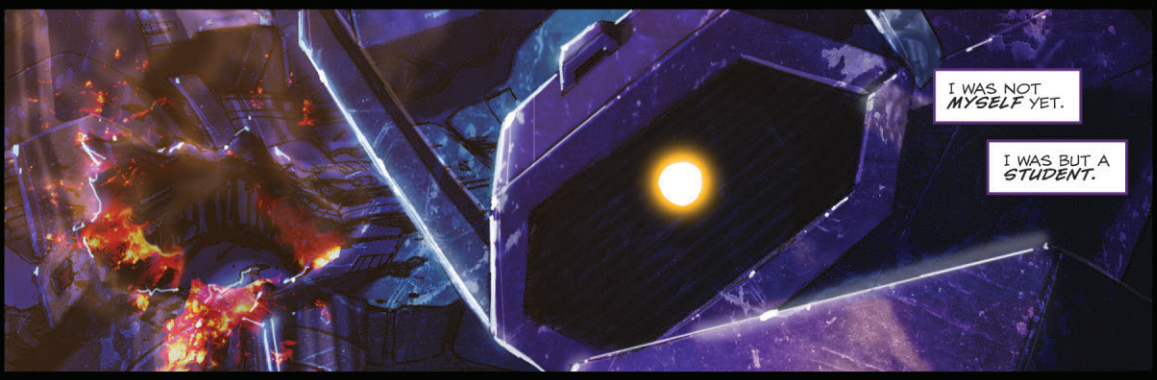
...THERE IS ALWAYS MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE.


THE CRYSTAL CITY. THE LAST TRACE OF OLD CYBERTRON IN A WORLD RETURNED TO ITS PRIMORDIAL STATE.
ON THE SURFACE, THE CITY OF IACON—THE ONLY OUTPOST OF CIVILIZATION ON THIS REFORMATTED PLANET—BURNS.
BUMBLEBEE LEADS HIS AUTOBOTS AGAINST MEGATRON'S DECEPTICONS—WITH THE CIVILIAN POPULATION CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE.
MEGATRON WILL FAIL TO RETURN US TO THE OLD WAYS OF WAR; JUST AS BUMBLEBEE WILL FAIL TO INAUGURATE A NEW GOLDEN AGE.
THEY BOTH RELY ON HOPE, ON BELIEF IN RIGHT AND WRONG.
I HAVE NO SUCH IMPURITY.
SHOCKWAVE—THIS IS AMAZING!
HOW—AFTER EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED—HOW IS THIS PLACE STILL STANDING?!
SHOCKWAVES

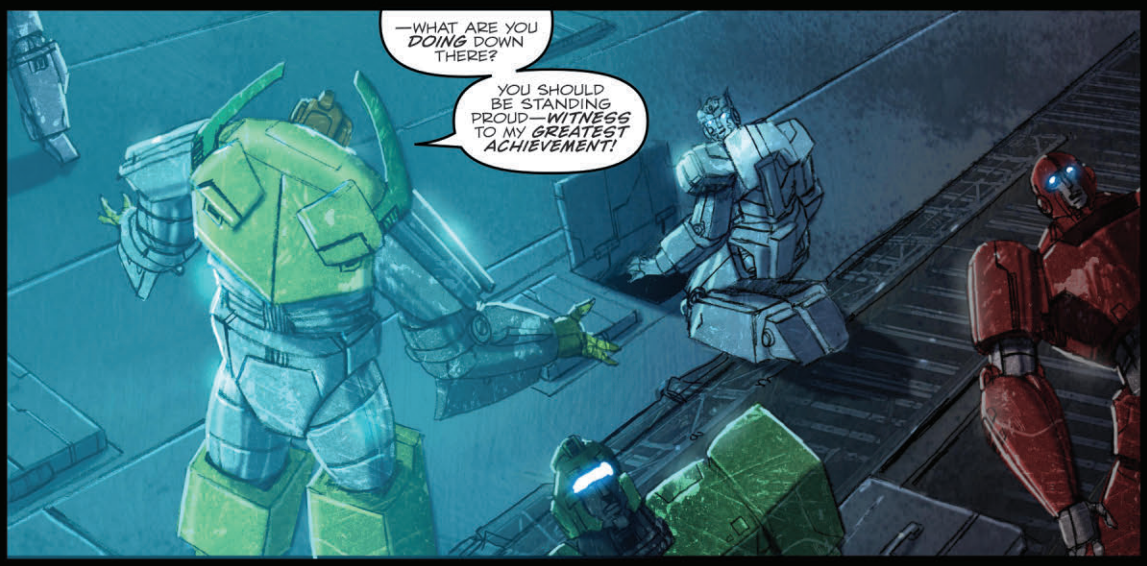
A FASCINATING CONUNDRUM, DREADWING.
IN FACT, IT IS EXACTLY THAT QUESTION THAT I NEED YOUR HELP IN ANSWERING.

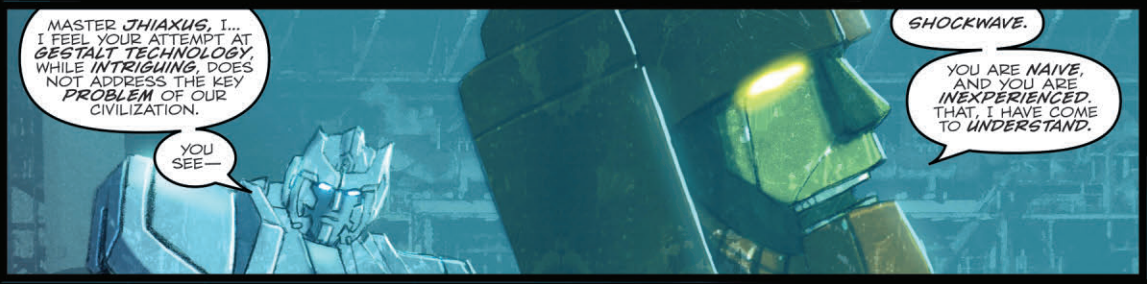
CHOOM

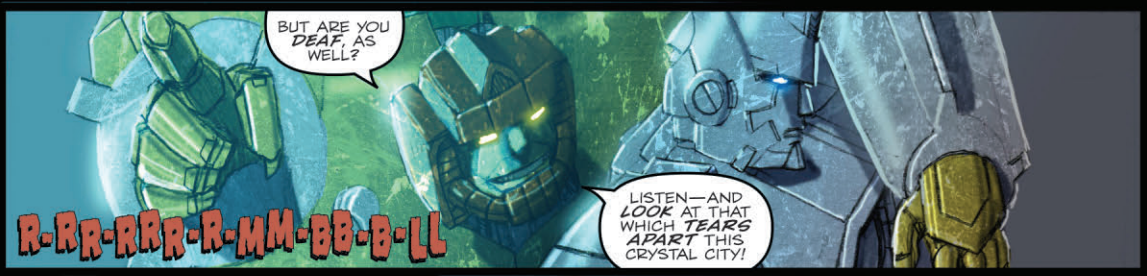

THIS CITY. I STOOD HERE, LONG AGO.
THEN, IT WAS NOT LOGIC THAT GOVERNED ME.

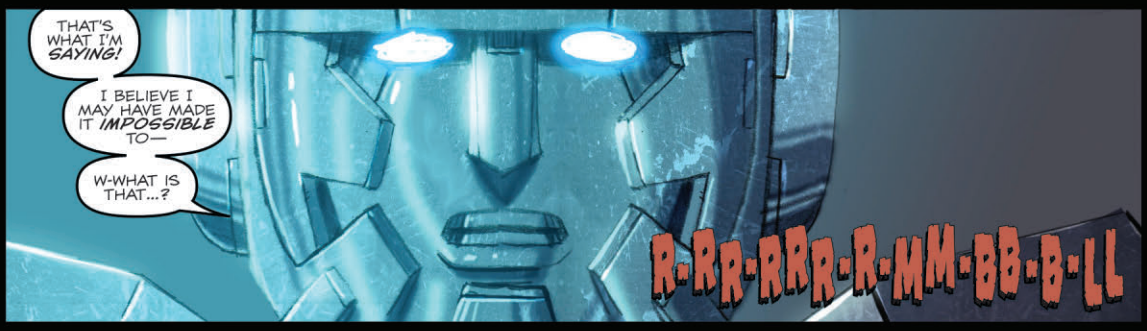

I WAS NOT MYSELF YET.
I WAS BUT A STUDENT.

I HAD YET TO BECOME THE *REAL* ME.
SHOCKWAVE—


—WHAT ARE YOU *DOING* DOWN THERE?
YOU SHOULD BE STANDING PROUD—*WITNESS* TO MY *GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT!*


MASTER *JHIAXUS*, I... I FEEL YOUR ATTEMPT AT *GESTALT TECHNOLOGY*, WHILE *INTRIGUING*, DOES NOT ADDRESS THE KEY *PROBLEM* OF OUR CIVILIZATION.
YOU SEE—
SHOCKWAVE.
YOU ARE *NAIVE*, AND YOU ARE *INEXPERIENCED*. THAT, I HAVE COME TO *UNDERSTAND*.


BUT ARE YOU *DEAF*, AS WELL?
R-RR-RRR-R-MM-BB-B-LL
LISTEN—AND *LOOK* AT THAT WHICH *TEARS APART* THIS CRYSTAL CITY!


THAT'S WHAT I'M *SAYING!*
I BELIEVE I MAY HAVE MADE IT *IMPOSSIBLE* TO—
W-WHAT IS THAT...?
R-RR-RRR-R-MM-BB-B-LL

R-RR-RRR-R-MM-BB-B-LL
IT IS CALLED MONSTRUCTOR— AND IT BATTLES THE GREATEST OF CYBERTRON'S SENTINELS, OMEGA SUPREME!
THE GESTALT— A COMBINED FORM OF SIX CYBERTRONIANS! YOU REMEMBER MY VOLUNTEERS, BRISTLEBACK, SCOWL—
THEY VOLUNTEERED FOR—
FOR THIS?

THEY VOLUNTEERED FOR SCIENCE—FOR THE GATHERING OF INFORMATION, SHOCKWAVE.
NONE OF US KNEW WHERE IT WOULD LEAD...
I HAD TRAINED UNDER JHIAXUS FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS...

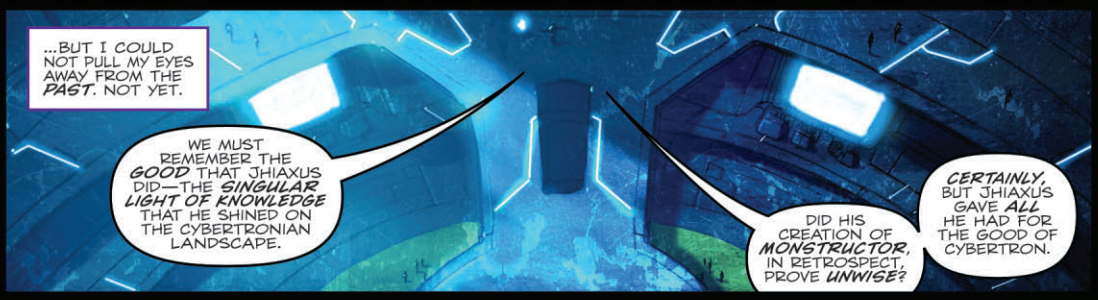
...BUT IT WAS ON THAT DAY THAT MY EDUCATION BEGAN IN EARNEST.
I BELIEVED JHIAXUS INCAPABLE OF WRONG. UNTIL THAT DAY.
UNTIL I WATCHED MONSTRUCTOR FALL.

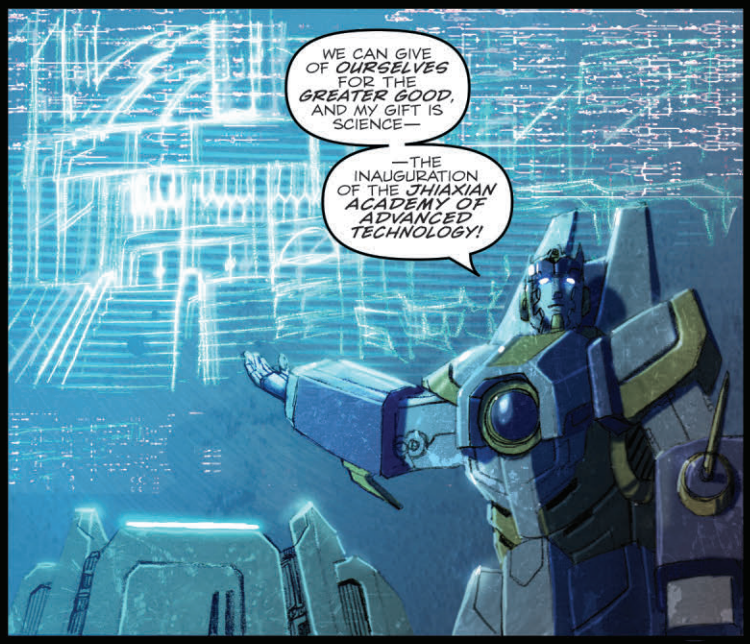
HIS GREATEST TRIUMPH TURNED INTO AN INSURMOUNTABLE DEFEAT. MY MASTER TOOK HIS SECRETS OF GESTALT TECHNOLOGY...
...HE LEFT CYBERTRON...
...NOT IN DISGRACE, BUT BEFORE DISGRACE COULD TOUCH HIM.

WITH JHIAXUS GONE, HIS ROLE FELL TO ME.

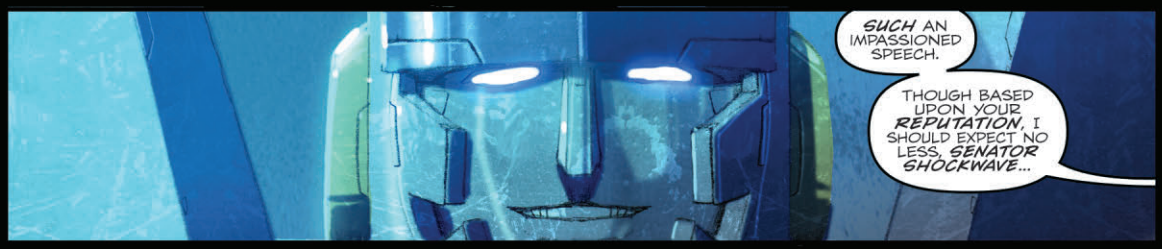
I DID NOT KNOW JHIAXUS' SECRETS... BUT NO ONE KNEW MINE.
AND CYBERTRON NEEDED ME MORE THAN MY TEACHER.

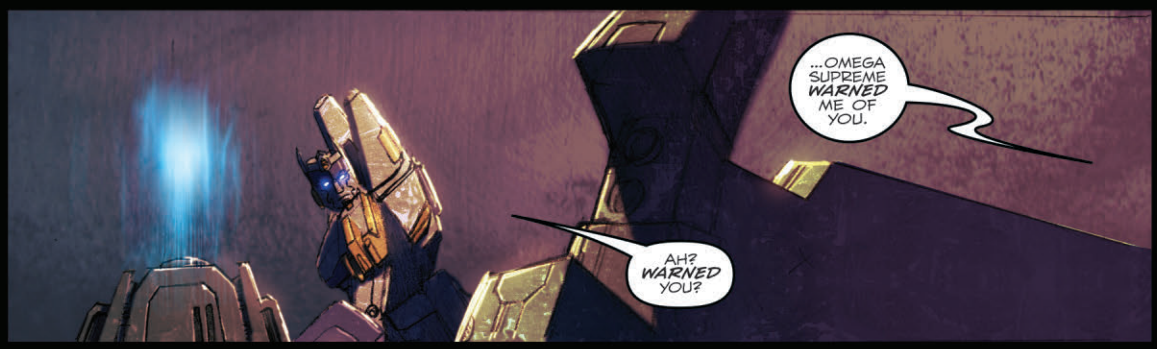
I WATCHED THE BURIAL OF THE RUINED CRYSTAL CITY.
I TOLD NO ONE OF THE SEED I HAD SOWED WITHIN. THE SEED OF A SINGULAR VISION FOR THE FUTURE...


...BUT I COULD NOT PULL MY EYES AWAY FROM THE PAST. NOT YET.
WE MUST REMEMBER THE GOOD THAT JHIAXUS DID—THE SINGULAR LIGHT OF KNOWLEDGE THAT HE SHINED ON THE CYBERTRONIAN LANDSCAPE.
DID HIS CREATION OF MONSTRUCTOR, IN RETROSPECT, PROVE UNWISE?
CERTAINLY, BUT JHIAXUS GAVE ALL HE HAD FOR THE GOOD OF CYBERTRON.


WE CAN GIVE OF OURSELVES FOR THE GREATER GOOD, AND MY GIFT IS SCIENCE—
—THE INAUGURATION OF THE JHIAXIAN ACADEMY OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY!

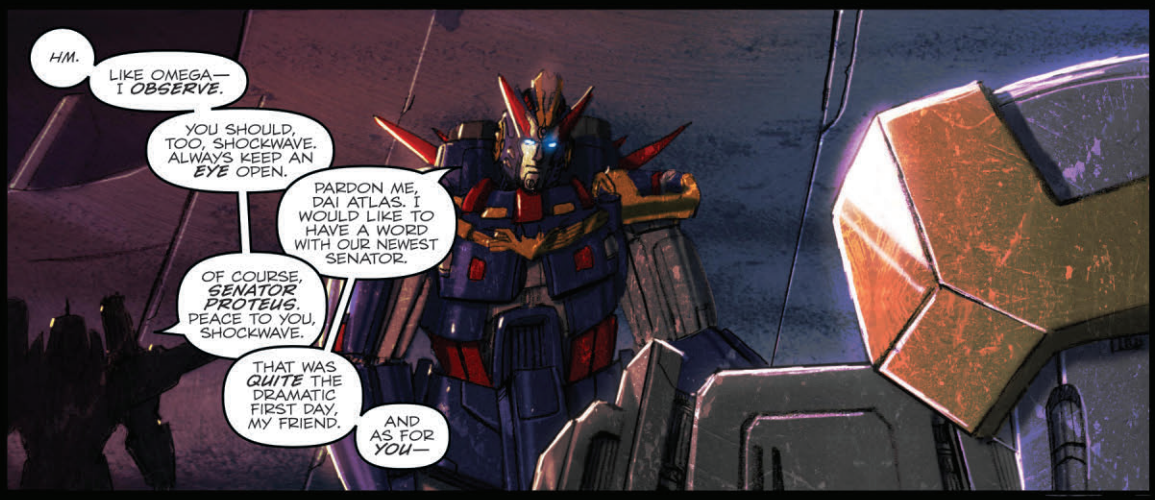
CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP
CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP


SUCH AN IMPASSIONED SPEECH.
THOUGH BASED UPON YOUR REPUTATION, I SHOULD EXPECT NO LESS, SENATOR SHOCKWAVE...

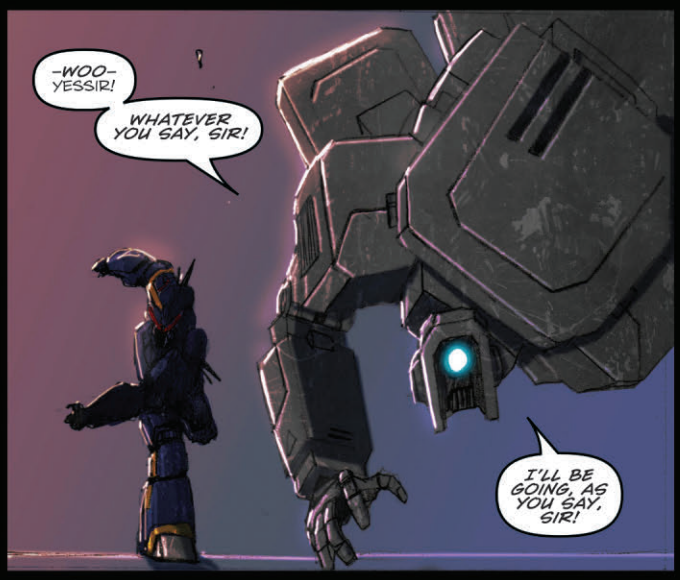

...OMEGA SUPREME WARNED ME OF YOU.
AH? WARNED YOU?

YES. OF THE CRUEL SCIENCES PERPETUATED BY JHIAXUS' STUDENT.
OMEGA DOES NOT KNOW ME, SENATOR DAI ATLAS.
HE BELIEVES HIMSELF ABLE TO LOOK AT FACTS, AND DRAW CONCLUSIONS.

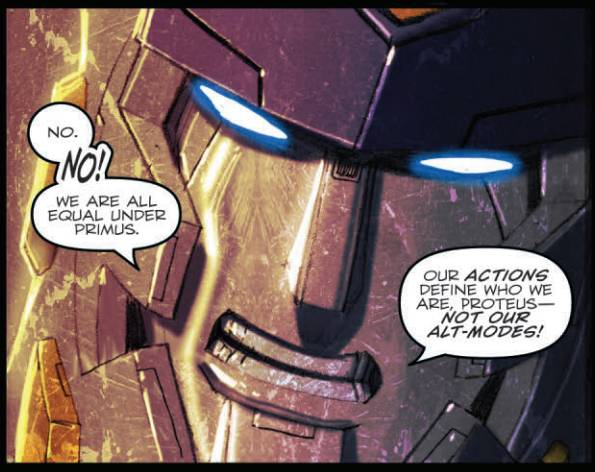
I SEE.
JHIAXUS WENT TOO FAR, BUT HE WAS A GREAT SCIENTIST. I DO NOT CELEBRATE HIS MISSTEPS, BUT HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS.


HM.
LIKE OMEGA— I OBSERVE.
YOU SHOULD, TOO, SHOCKWAVE. ALWAYS KEEP AN EYE OPEN.
PARDON ME, DAI ATLAS. I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A WORD WITH OUR NEWEST SENATOR.
OF COURSE, SENATOR PROTEUS. PEACE TO YOU, SHOCKWAVE.
THAT WAS QUITE THE DRAMATIC FIRST DAY, MY FRIEND.
AND AS FOR YOU—

—BE GONE WITH YOU, YOU WRETCH!
AHH—

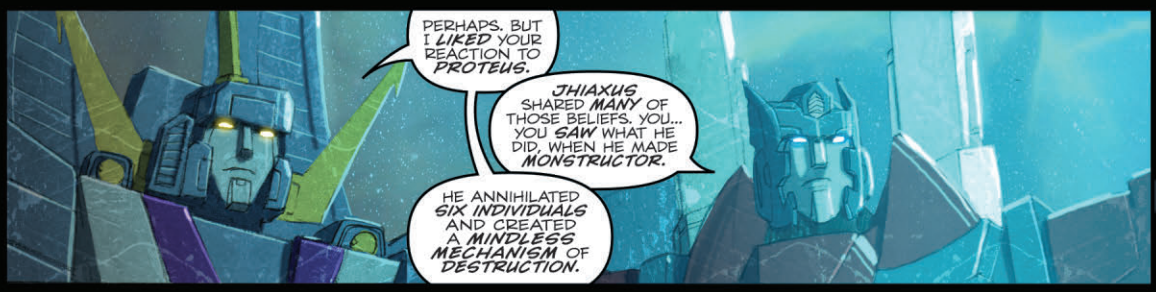

—WOO— YESSIR!
WHATEVER YOU SAY, SIR!
I'LL BE GOING, AS YOU SAY, SIR!

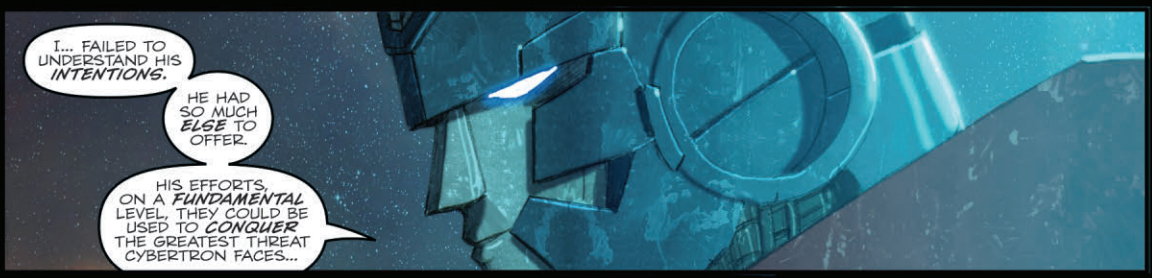
WH—THE PROJECTOR WAS—
—I DIDN'T REALIZE IT—HE—WAS A CYBERTRONIAN!
BARELY. ONE OF THE DISPOSABLE CLASS.
FUNCTIONALIST TEACHINGS TELL US THAT WE OF THE SUPERIOR ALT-MODES SHOULD REIGN OVER THOSE WHO ARE...
...WELL, PROJECTORS.


NO.
NO!
WE ARE ALL EQUAL UNDER PRIMUS.
OUR ACTIONS DEFINE WHO WE ARE, PROTEUS— NOT OUR ALT-MODES!

SUCH AN... EMOTIONAL REACTION IS UNBECOMING OF A SENATOR.
PERHAPS IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN THERE, AND I MERELY HADN'T SEEN IT.

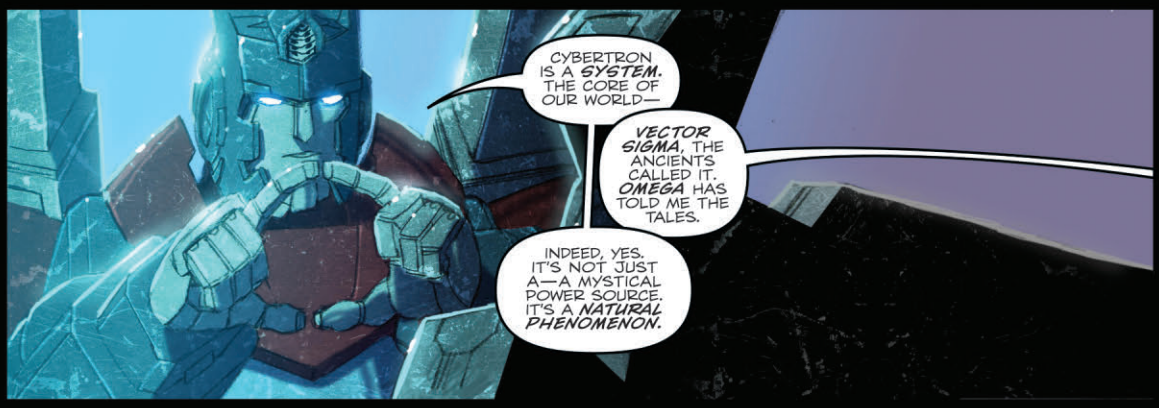
WHATEVER THE CASE, THE RATIOISTS, THE FUNCTIONALISTS... ALL BEGAN SEGREGATING OUR SOCIETY.
THINKING ABOUT SOMETHING, MY FRIEND?
ARE YOU MY FRIEND, NOW?
I THOUGHT YOU WERE WARY OF ME, DAI ATLAS.

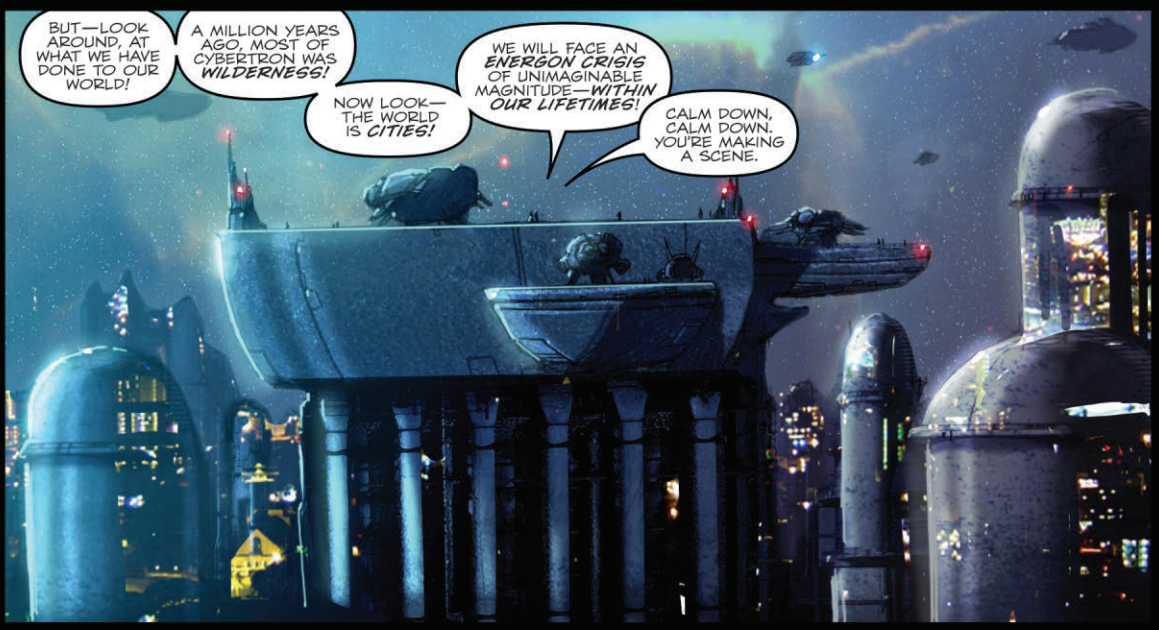

PERHAPS. BUT I LIKED YOUR REACTION TO PROTEUS.
JHIAXUS SHARED MANY OF THOSE BELIEFS. YOU... YOU SAW WHAT HE DID, WHEN HE MADE MONSTRUCTOR.
HE ANNIHILATED SIX INDIVIDUALS AND CREATED A MINDLESS MECHANISM OF DESTRUCTION.


I... FAILED TO UNDERSTAND HIS INTENTIONS.
HE HAD SO MUCH ELSE TO OFFER.
HIS EFFORTS, ON A FUNDAMENTAL LEVEL, THEY COULD BE USED TO CONQUER THE GREATEST THREAT CYBERTRON FACES...

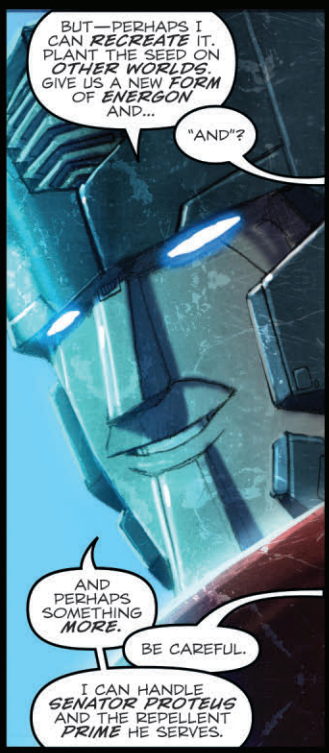
AND THAT IS?
NO ONE BELIEVES WHAT I SAY.
TRY ME, SHOCKWAVE.
YOU LET YOUR EMOTIONS GET THE BETTER OF YOU, AND YOU CERTAINLY DON'T KNOW HOW TO PICK YOUR BATTLES, BUT YOUR SPARK SEEMS TO BE IN THE RIGHT PLACE.

RESOURCES. FUNDAMENTALLY, IT'S RESOURCES.
SEE THOSE MINERS, GOING OFF TO LUNA-2?
WE SHOULDN'T NEED THAT.

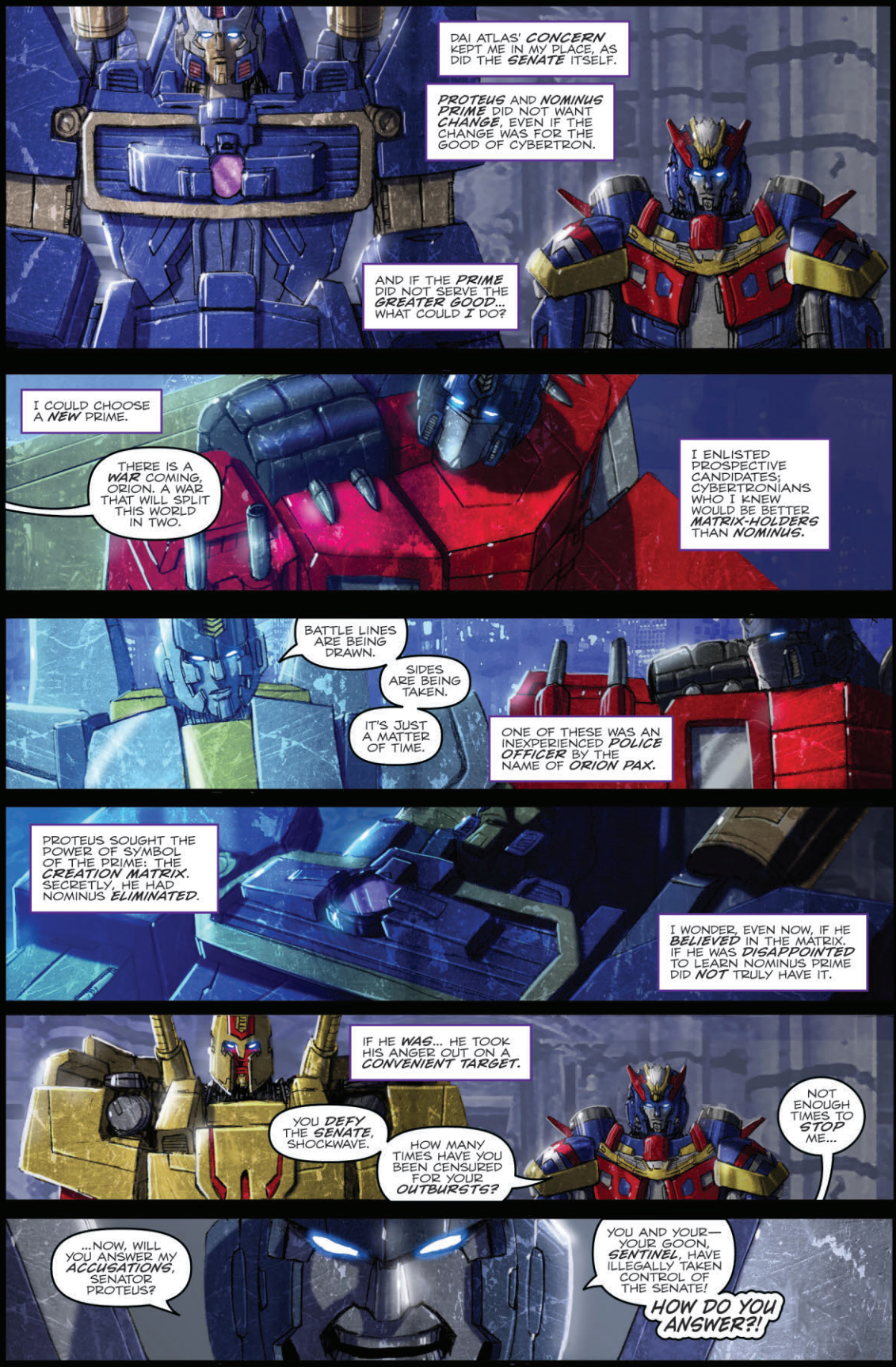

CYBERTRON IS A SYSTEM. THE CORE OF OUR WORLD—
VECTOR SIGMA, THE ANCIENTS CALLED IT. OMEGA HAS TOLD ME THE TALES.
INDEED, YES. IT'S NOT JUST A—A MYSTICAL POWER SOURCE. IT'S A NATURAL PHENOMENON.


BUT—LOOK AROUND, AT WHAT WE HAVE DONE TO OUR WORLD!
A MILLION YEARS AGO, MOST OF CYBERTRON WAS WILDERNESS!
NOW LOOK—THE WORLD IS CITIES!
WE WILL FACE AN ENERGON CRISIS OF UNIMAGINABLE MAGNITUDE—WITHIN OUR LIFETIMES!
CALM DOWN, CALM DOWN. YOU'RE MAKING A SCENE.

YES, YES... BUT... I PLANTED A SEED.
A... YOU DID WHAT?
A SEED. IN THE CRYSTAL CITY.
THAT SAME DAY THAT MONSTRUCTOR... WELL.
CRYSTAL CITY WAS DESTROYED, AND WE SEALED AWAY THE RUINS.
THE SEED WAS NOT ABLE TO GROW.


BUT—PERHAPS I CAN RECREATE IT. PLANT THE SEED ON OTHER WORLDS. GIVE US A NEW FORM OF ENERGON AND...
"AND"?
AND PERHAPS SOMETHING MORE.
BE CAREFUL.
I CAN HANDLE SENATOR PROTEUS AND THE REPELLENT PRIME HE SERVES.

FIRST—NO, YOU CAN'T.
BUT WHAT I REALLY MEAN TO SAY—
—JUST BE CAREFUL YOU DON'T BECOME THE CRUEL SCIENTIST OMEGA SUPREME WARNED ME OF.


DAI ATLAS' CONCERN KEPT ME IN MY PLACE, AS DID THE SENATE ITSELF.
PROTEUS AND NOMINUS PRIME DID NOT WANT CHANGE, EVEN IF THE CHANGE WAS FOR THE GOOD OF CYBERTRON.
AND IF THE PRIME DID NOT SERVE THE GREATER GOOD... WHAT COULD I DO?
I COULD CHOOSE A NEW PRIME.
THERE IS A WAR COMING, ORION. A WAR THAT WILL SPLIT THIS WORLD IN TWO.
I ENLISTED PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATES; CYBERTRONIANS WHO I KNEW WOULD BE BETTER MATRIX-HOLDERS THAN NOMINUS.
BATTLE LINES ARE BEING DRAWN.
SIDES ARE BEING TAKEN.
IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME.
ONE OF THESE WAS AN INEXPERIENCED POLICE OFFICER BY THE NAME OF ORION PAX.
PROTEUS SOUGHT THE POWER OF SYMBOL OF THE PRIME: THE CREATION MATRIX. SECRETLY, HE HAD NOMINUS ELIMINATED.
I WONDER, EVEN NOW, IF HE BELIEVED IN THE MATRIX. IF HE WAS DISAPPOINTED TO LEARN NOMINUS PRIME DID NOT TRULY HAVE IT.
IF HE WAS... HE TOOK HIS ANGER OUT ON A CONVENIENT TARGET.
YOU DEFY THE SENATE, SHOCKWAVE.
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BEEN CENSURED FOR YOUR OUTBURSTS?
NOT ENOUGH TIMES TO STOP ME...
...NOW, WILL YOU ANSWER MY ACCUSATIONS, SENATOR PROTEUS?
YOU AND YOUR— YOUR GOON, SENTINEL, HAVE ILLEGALLY TAKEN CONTROL OF THE SENATE!
HOW DO YOU ANSWER?!

BUT THAT WAS NOT ENOUGH.

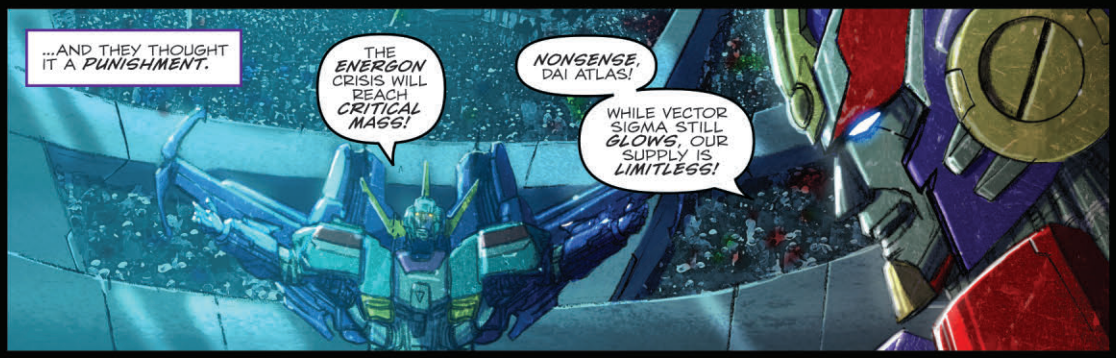
THEY DID LITERALLY WHAT THEY COULD NOT DO THROUGH PERSUASION.

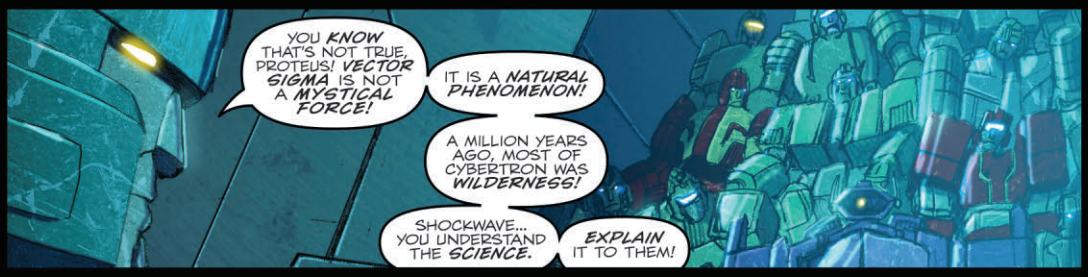
THEY CHANGED MY MIND.

THEY CUT AWAY MY EMOTION CENTERS.

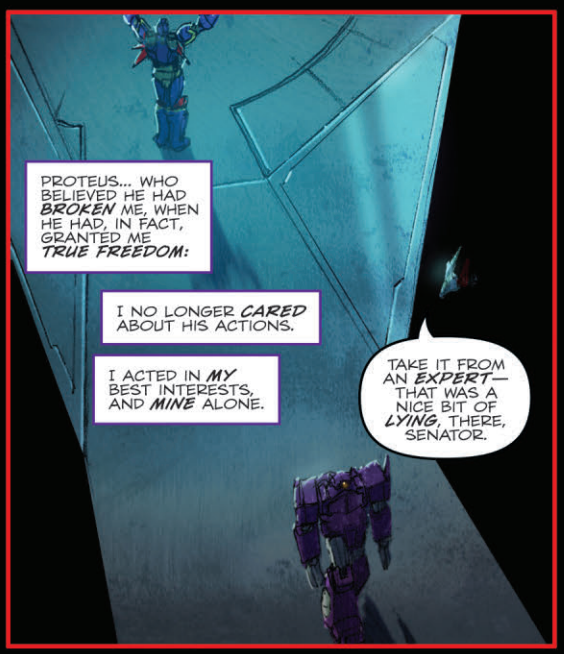
THEY REBUILT MY PERSONALITY.

"SHADOWPLAY" IS WHAT THEY CALLED IT...


...AND THEY THOUGHT IT A PUNISHMENT.
THE ENERGON CRISIS WILL REACH CRITICAL MASS!
NONSENSE, DAI ATLAS!
WHILE VECTOR SIGMA STILL GLOWS, OUR SUPPLY IS LIMITLESS!

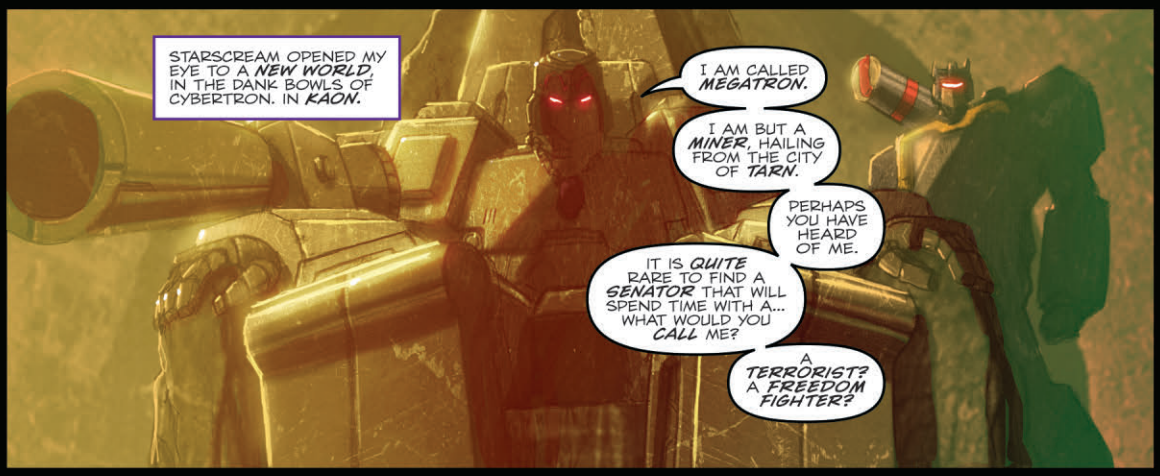

YOU KNOW THAT'S NOT TRUE, PROTEUS! VECTOR SIGMA IS NOT A MYSTICAL FORCE!
IT IS A NATURAL PHENOMENON!
A MILLION YEARS AGO, MOST OF CYBERTRON WAS WILDERNESS!
SHOCKWAVE... YOU UNDERSTAND THE SCIENCE.
EXPLAIN IT TO THEM!

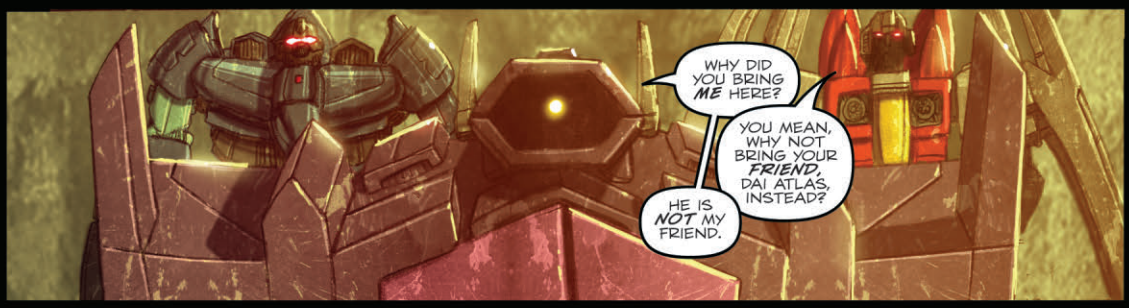
YOU ARE INCORRECT. YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT NOTHING.
YOU ARE USING AN IMAGINARY PHENOMENON IN PURSUIT OF POLITICAL POWER, DAI ATLAS.
LOGIC DICTATED I LIE, AND MY LIE SWAYED THE PARTS OF THE SENATE STILL NOT CONTROLLED BY PROTEUS.

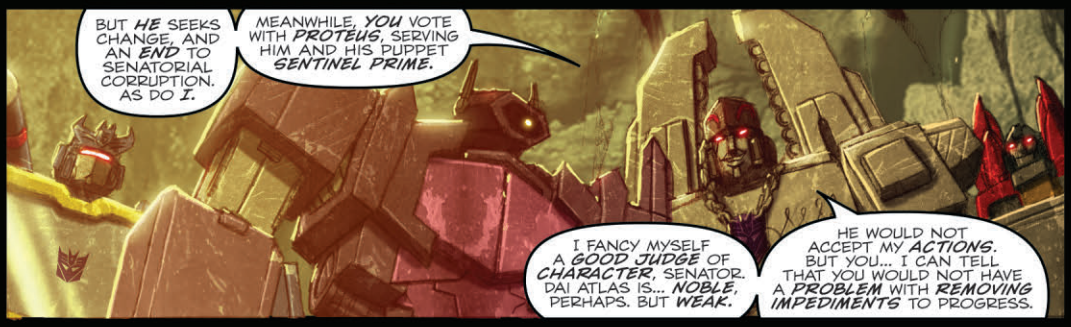

PROTEUS... WHO BELIEVED HE HAD BROKEN ME, WHEN HE HAD, IN FACT, GRANTED ME TRUE FREEDOM:
I NO LONGER CARED ABOUT HIS ACTIONS.
I ACTED IN MY BEST INTERESTS, AND MINE ALONE.
TAKE IT FROM AN EXPERT— THAT WAS A NICE BIT OF LYING, THERE, SENATOR.

MY COLLEAGUES TYPICALLY DO NOT WISH TO ASSOCIATE WITH ME, AFTER MY EMPURATA.
I PREFER IT THAT WAY.
YEAH?
WELL, I'M NOT A COLLEAGUE OF YOURS. AT LEAST NOT YET.

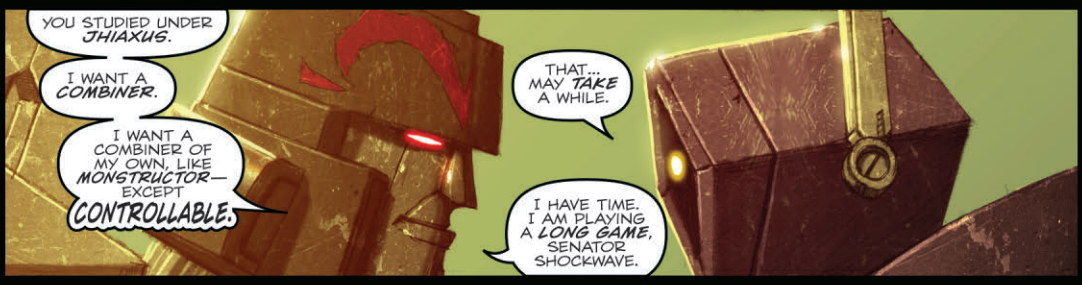
THEY CALL ME STARSCREAM. I REPRESENT A LITTLE GROUP...
...HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF THE DECEPTICONS?


STARSCREAM OPENED MY EYE TO A NEW WORLD, IN THE DANK BOWLS OF CYBERTRON. IN KAON.
I AM CALLED MEGATRON.
I AM BUT A MINER, HAILING FROM THE CITY OF TARN.
PERHAPS YOU HAVE HEARD OF ME.
IT IS QUITE RARE TO FIND A SENATOR THAT WILL SPEND TIME WITH A... WHAT WOULD YOU CALL ME?
A TERRORIST? A FREEDOM FIGHTER?


WHY DID YOU BRING ME HERE?
YOU MEAN, WHY NOT BRING YOUR FRIEND, DAI ATLAS, INSTEAD?
HE IS NOT MY FRIEND.

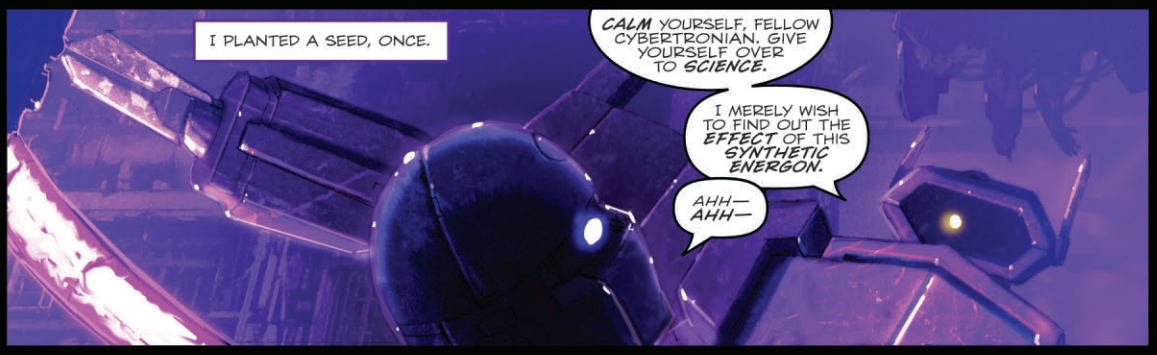

BUT HE SEEKS CHANGE, AND AN END TO SENATORIAL CORRUPTION. AS DO I.
MEANWHILE, YOU VOTE WITH PROTEUS, SERVING HIM AND HIS PUPPET SENTINEL PRIME.
I FANCY MYSELF A GOOD JUDGE OF CHARACTER, SENATOR. DAI ATLAS IS... NOBLE, PERHAPS. BUT WEAK.
HE WOULD NOT ACCEPT MY ACTIONS. BUT YOU... I CAN TELL THAT YOU WOULD NOT HAVE A PROBLEM WITH REMOVING IMPEDIMENTS TO PROGRESS.

YOU VOTE AS HE DOES, BUT... YOU DO NOT STAND WITH PROTEUS.
YOU'RE USING THE SENATE FOR YOUR OWN ENDS, BUT THE SENATE HAS VERY LIMITED RESOURCES WHEN IT COMES TO WHAT YOU WISH TO ACCOMPLISH.

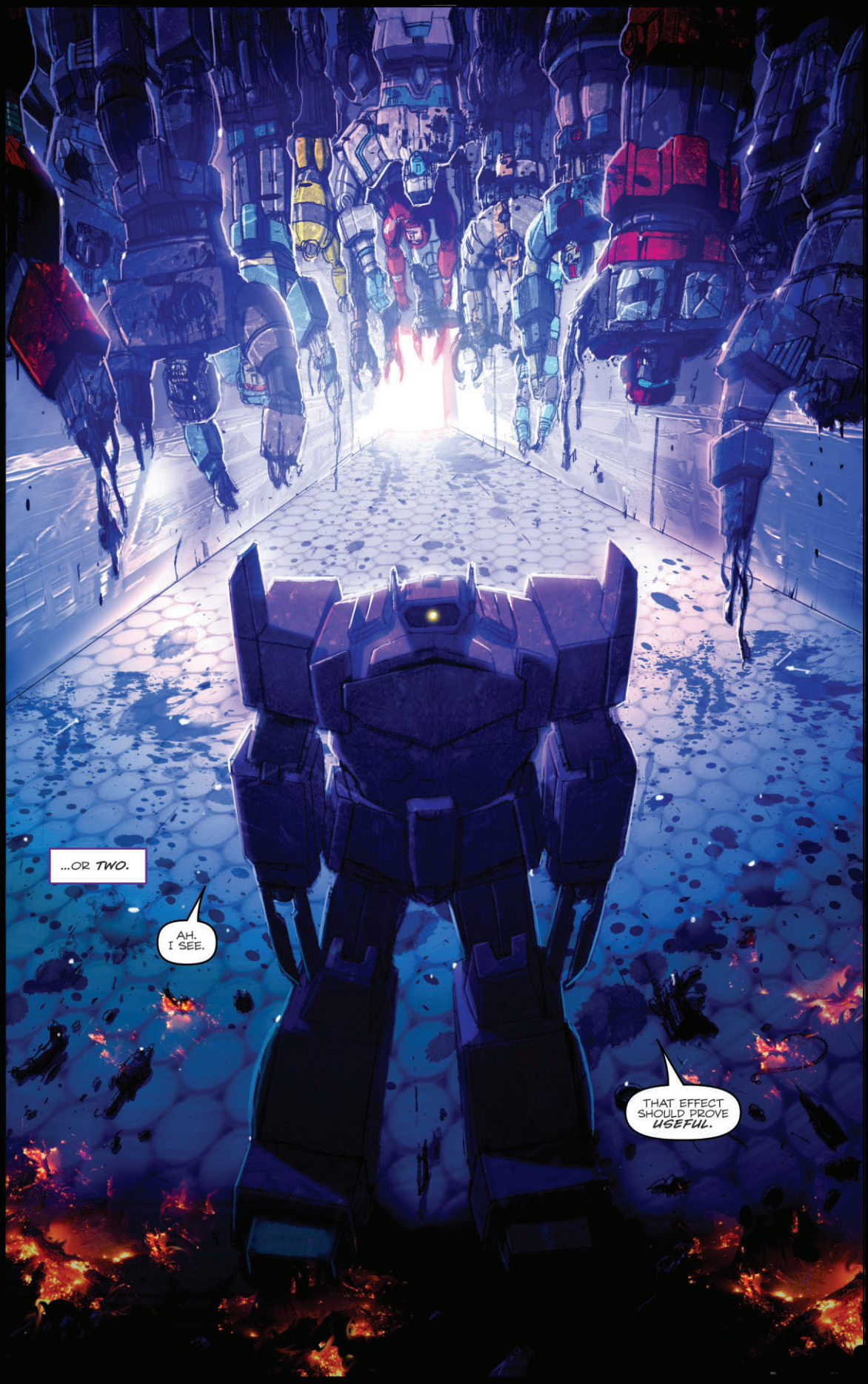

YOU STUDIED UNDER JHIAXUS.
I WANT A COMBINER.
I WANT A COMBINER OF MY OWN, LIKE MONSTRUCTOR— EXCEPT CONTROLLABLE.
THAT... MAY TAKE A WHILE.
I HAVE TIME. I AM PLAYING A LONG GAME, SENATOR SHOCKWAVE.

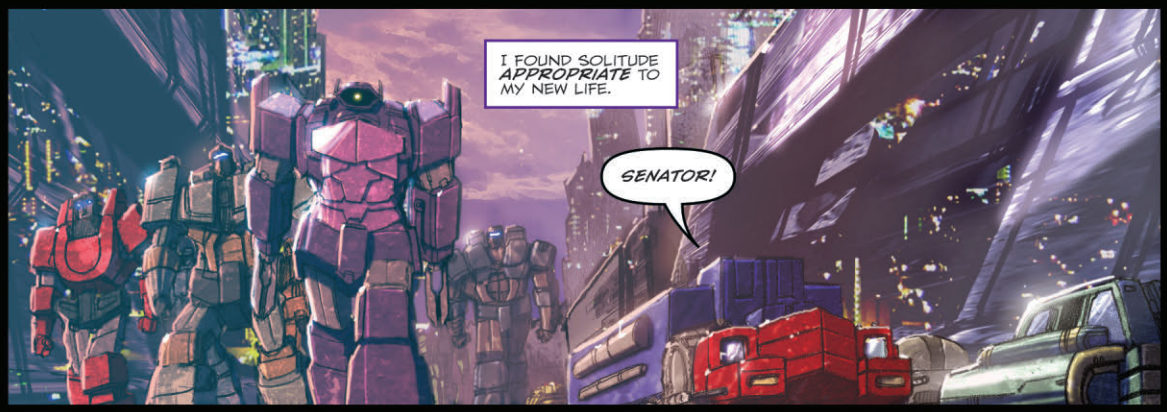
MEGATRON PROVIDED ME WITH A LABORATORY. HE WOULD HAVE HIS GESTALT, BUT MY PRIORITIES LAY ELSEWHERE. I WOULD HAVE MY SECRETS.
HE HAD ASKED WHETHER I SAW HIM AS A TERRORIST OR A FREEDOM FIGHTER.
I SAW HIM AS AN OPPORTUNITY.

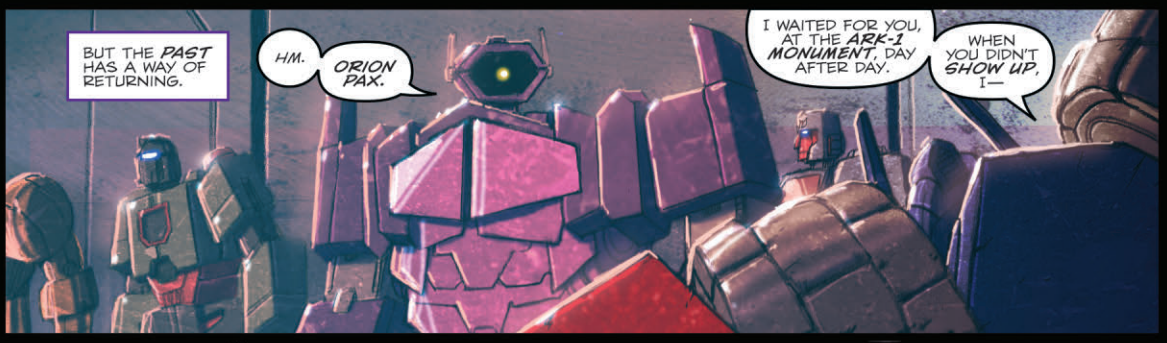
THE ENERGON CRISIS WAS REAL.
WHAT— WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO ME—?
IN TIME, THE SCIENTISTS OF CYBERTRON WOULD SEE THIS WAS TRUE, BUT THEY WOULD NOT REALIZE:
THE FINAL BATTLE WOULD BE FOR RESOURCES.


I PLANTED A SEED, ONCE.
CALM YOURSELF, FELLOW CYBERTRONIAN. GIVE YOURSELF OVER TO SCIENCE.
I MERELY WISH TO FIND OUT THE EFFECT OF THIS SYNTHETIC ENERGON.
AHH— AHH—

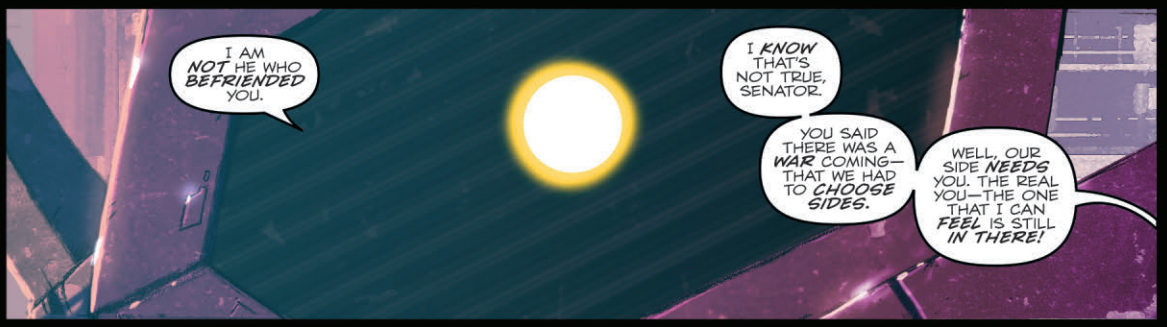
SOON, CYBERTRON WOULD BE READY FOR REAPING.
KR-THROM
A SINGLE CYBERTRONIAN— ONE OF OUR BOURGEONING UNDERCLASS—WOULD NOT BE MISSED.
A SINGLE CYBERTRONIAN...

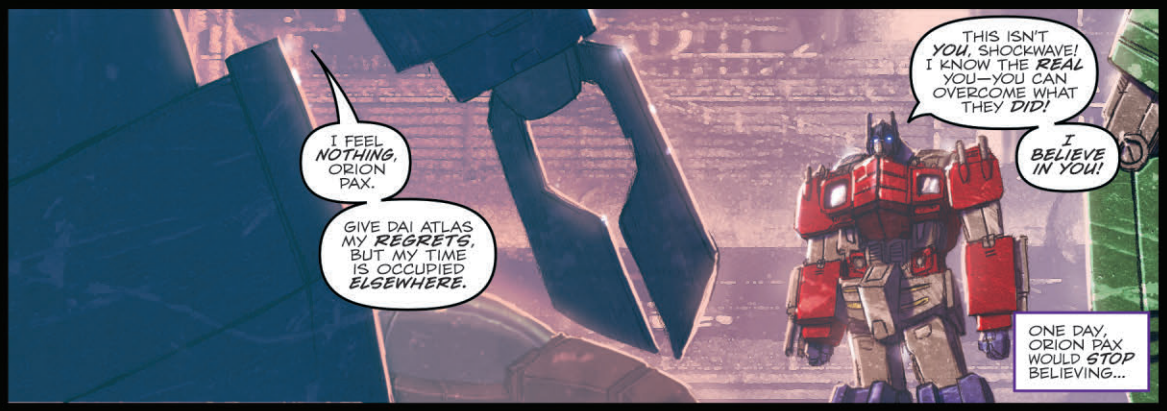

...OR TWO.
AH. I SEE.
THAT EFFECT SHOULD PROVE USEFUL.


I FOUND SOLITUDE APPROPRIATE TO MY NEW LIFE.
SENATOR!


BUT THE PAST HAS A WAY OF RETURNING.
HM.
ORION PAX.
I WAITED FOR YOU, AT THE ARK-1 MONUMENT, DAY AFTER DAY.
WHEN YOU DIDN'T SHOW UP, I—

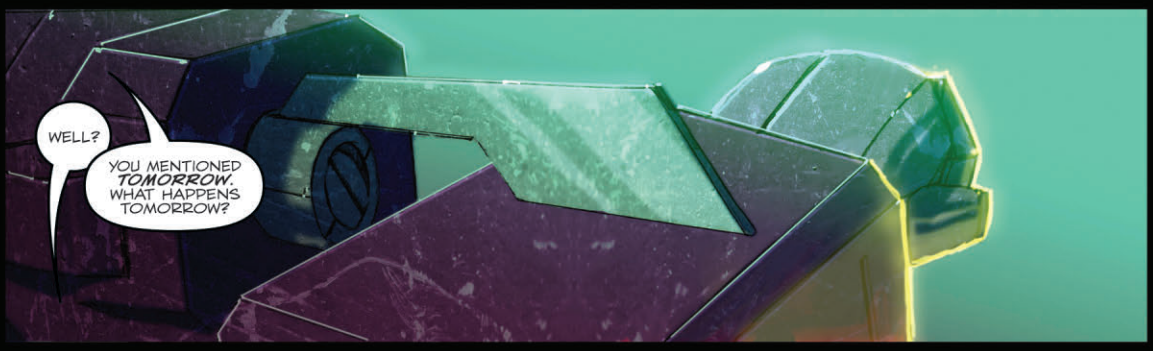
—I WAS WORRIED.
YOU HAVEN'T TRIED TO—TO TALK TO ME.
DAI ATLAS—HE CAN BARELY STAND A COP LIKE ME—BUT HE SOUGHT ME OUT—
YOU SHOULD GIVE UP ON ME, ORION PAX.


I AM NOT HE WHO BEFRIENDED YOU.
I KNOW THAT'S NOT TRUE, SENATOR.
YOU SAID THERE WAS A WAR COMING—THAT WE HAD TO CHOOSE SIDES.
WELL, OUR SIDE NEEDS YOU. THE REAL YOU—THE ONE THAT I CAN FEEL IS STILL IN THERE!

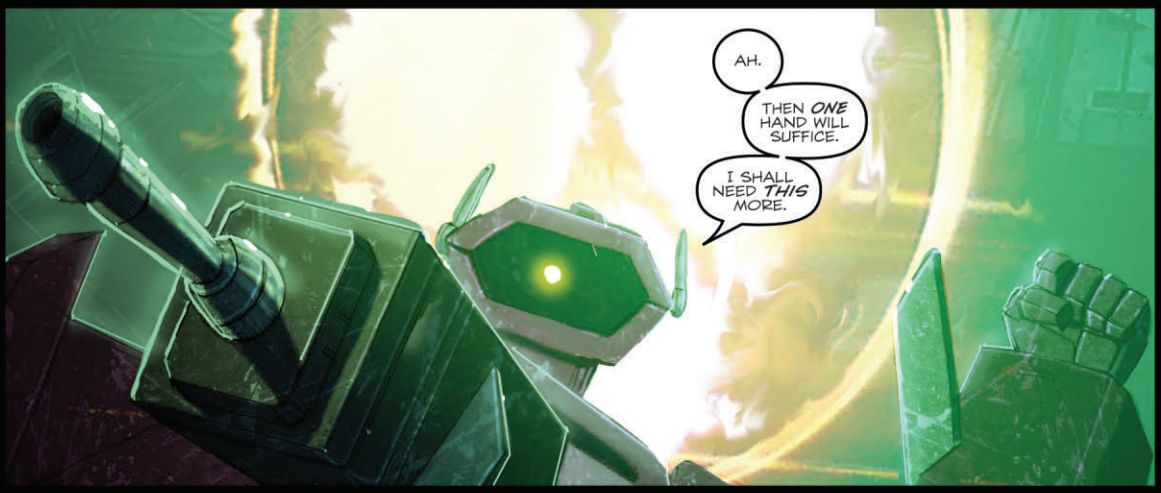

I FEEL NOTHING, ORION PAX.
GIVE DAI ATLAS MY REGRETS, BUT MY TIME IS OCCUPIED ELSEWHERE.
THIS ISN'T YOU, SHOCKWAVE! I KNOW THE REAL YOU—YOU CAN OVERCOME WHAT THEY DID!
I BELIEVE IN YOU!
ONE DAY, ORION PAX WOULD STOP BELIEVING...

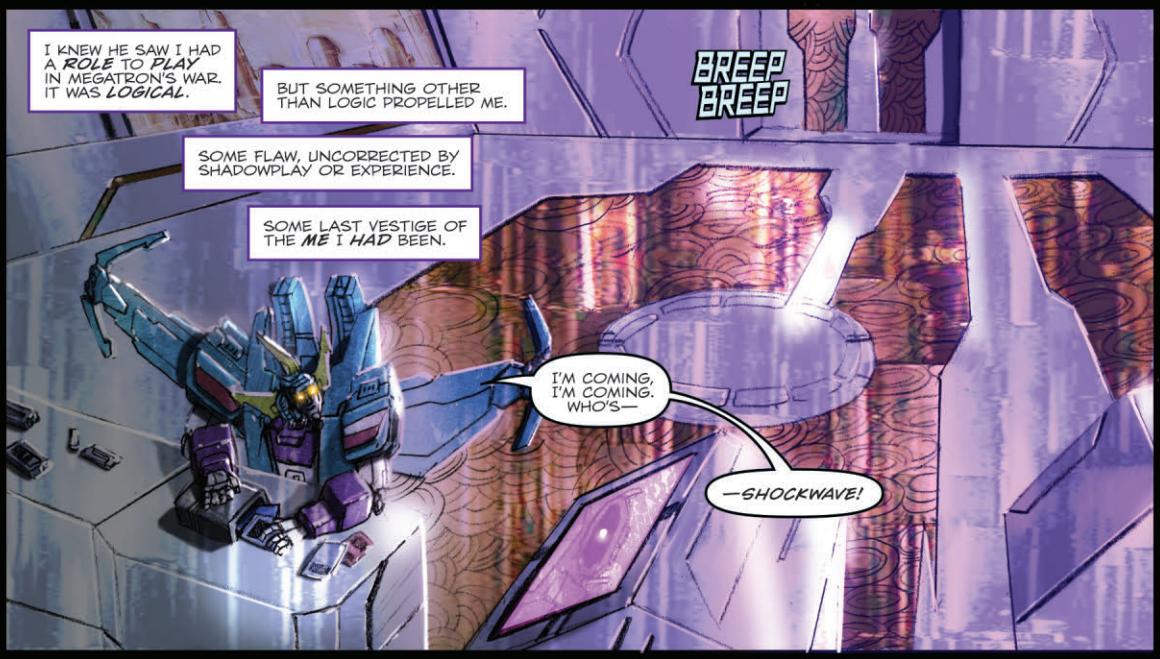
...ONE DAY.
HOW GOES YOUR EFFORTS TO BUILD MY COMBINER?
SLOWLY. IT WILL TAKE YEARS. CENTURIES, IN ALL LIKELIHOOD.
EH. NO MATTER.
THINGS BEGIN TOMORROW, BUT I DO NOT EXPECT THEY WILL END AS QUICKLY AS I WOULD LIKE.
HERE, MY GIFT TO YOU.

THEY TOOK YOUR HANDS, AND THAT SURELY DOES NOT SPEED YOUR SCIENCE.

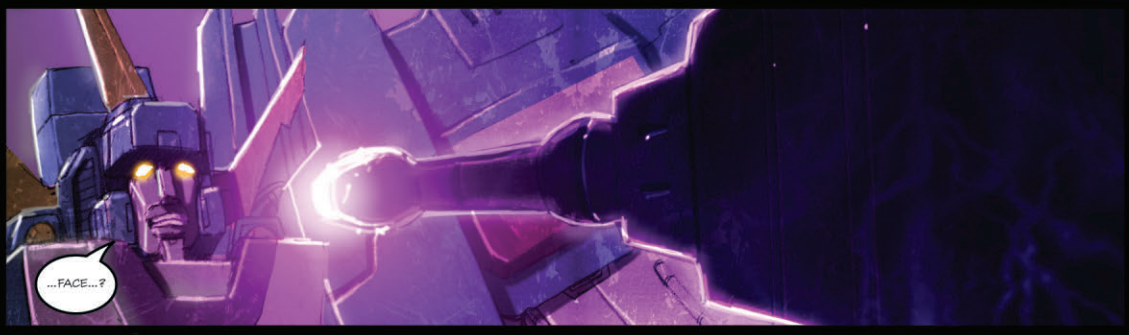

WELL?
YOU MENTIONED TOMORROW. WHAT HAPPENS TOMORROW?

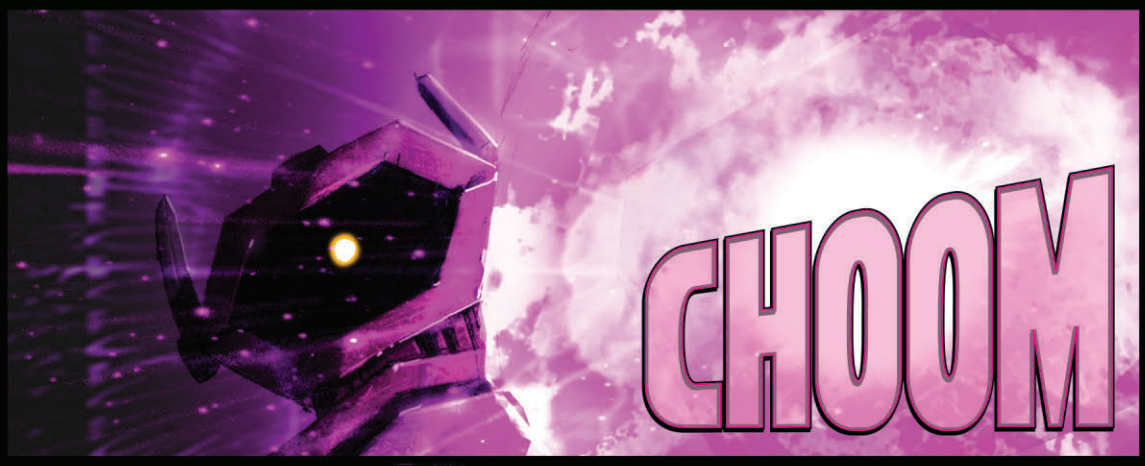
TOMORROW THE CYBERTRONIAN SENATE WILL COME HERE, TO KAON.
I SHALL ACCOMPLISH THE GREATEST ACT OF POLITICAL AMBITION IN THE HISTORY OF CYBERTRON.
I SHALL KILL THE SENATE.


AH.
THEN ONE HAND WILL SUFFICE.
I SHALL NEED THIS MORE.

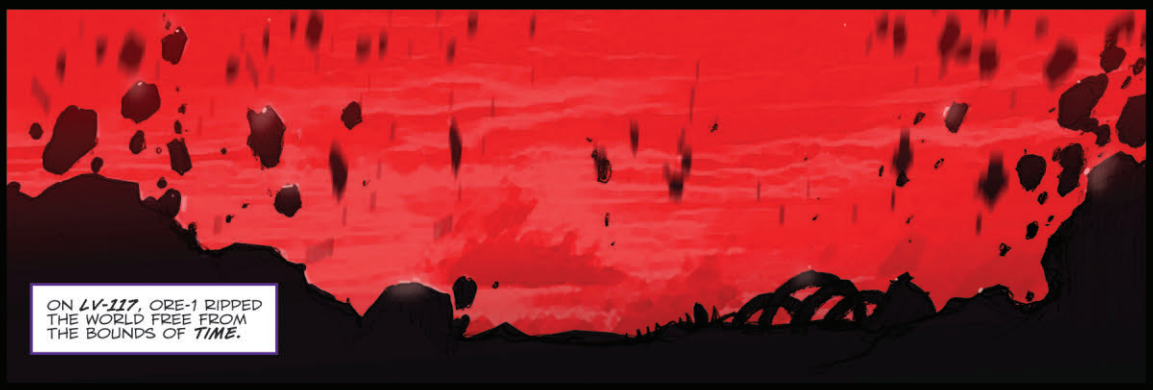

I KNEW HE SAW I HAD A ROLE TO PLAY IN MEGATRON'S WAR. IT WAS LOGICAL.
BUT SOMETHING OTHER THAN LOGIC PROPELLED ME.
SOME FLAW, UNCORRECTED BY SHADOWPLAY OR EXPERIENCE.
SOME LAST VESTIGE OF THE ME I HAD BEEN.
BREEP BREEP
I'M COMING, I'M COMING. WHO'S—
—SHOCKWAVE!

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, BUT WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
THE SENATE IS TRAVELING TO KAON, FOR AN EMERGENCY MEETING.
SOMETHING ABOUT THIS "DECEPTICON" CRISIS.
ARE YOU FINALLY SHOWING YOUR...


...FACE...?


CHOOM

A FINAL MOMENT OF... *SENTIMENTALITY*, PERHAPS.
*DAI ATLAS* WAS SAVED THE FATE OF OUR *FELLOW SENATORS*, AND THE ERA OF THE *DECEPTICON WAR* BEGAN IN EARNEST.
I WAS AT THE *FOREFRONT*.
I FACED VICTORIES AND DEFEATS, BUT MY PLAN *REMAINED*.
MEGATRON GOT HIS *COMBINER*—EVENTUALLY—AND I HAD MY *PLAN*.
I SPREAD MY EXPERIMENTS IN SYNTHETIC ENERGON—IN *REGENESIS*—TO THIRTEEN WORLDS.
MY *SEEDS* TOOK HOLD. THEY GREW—FLOURISHED INTO THIRTEEN ORES, EACH CHANGING ITS WORLD INTO SOMETHING... *GREATER*.


ON LV-117, ORE-1 RIPPED THE WORLD FREE FROM THE BOUNDS OF TIME.

ON ARDURIA, ORE-6 RADIATED UNCONTROLLABLE COLD.

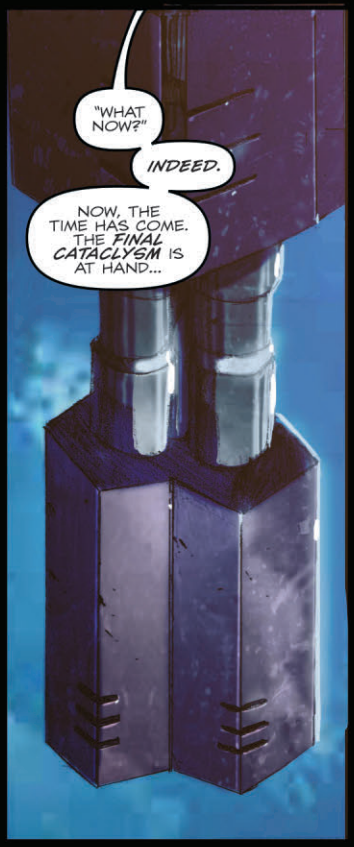
ON TSIEHSHI, ORE-8 CREATED CRYSTALS OF PURE DESTRUCTION.

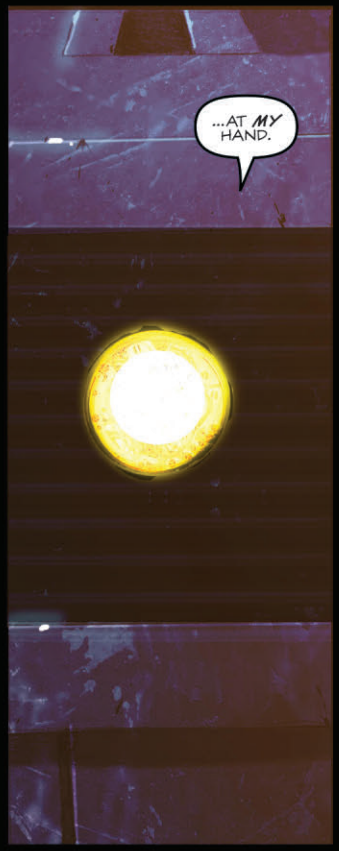
ON EARTH, ORE-13 BECAME A FUEL— ULTRA ENERGON. POWER ITSELF.

BUT MY GREATEST EXPERIMENT, THE KEY TO EVERYTHING...
...WAS A SEED LAID THAT FIRST DAY, WHEN MONSTRUCTOR STOOD ABOVE THE CRYSTAL CITY.
THIS WOULD PROVIDE THE GREATEST WEAPON OF ALL.

ORE-14:
RESURRECTION.
ARISE, DREADWING.
YOU SHALL BE THE FIRST TO EXPERIENCE MY ULTIMATE TRIUMPH.

OW.
HAH.
HOW LONG WAS I... WELL, FEELS GOOD TO BE BACK.
WISH YOU'D'A GIVEN ME A LITTLE WARNING, THOUGH.
ANYWAY. WHAT NOW?


"WHAT NOW?"
INDEED.
NOW, THE TIME HAS COME. THE FINAL CATACLYSM IS AT HAND...


...AT MY HAND.

ROBOTS IN DISGUISE #17 COVER B

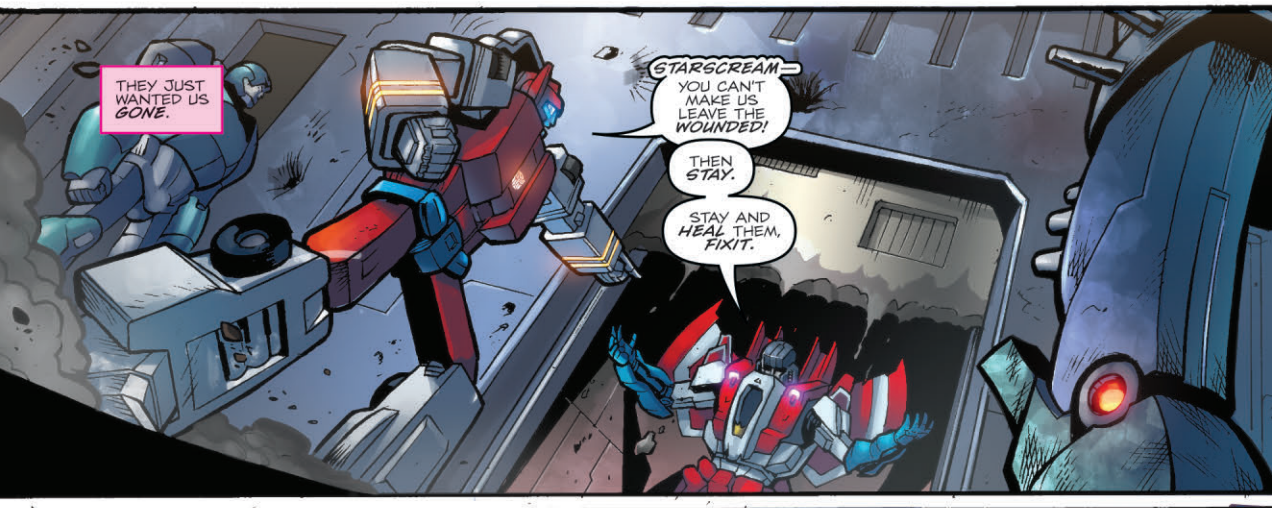
by **CASEY W. COLLER** Colors by **JOANA LAFUENTE**

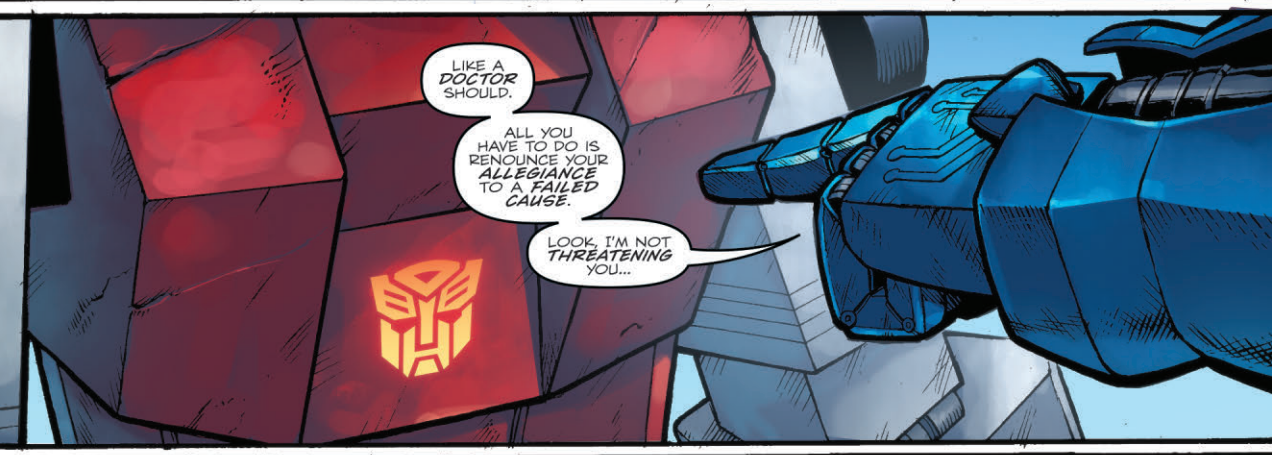
□ ROBOTS IN DISGUISE #18 COVER A

by **ANDREW GRIFFITH** COLORS BY **JOSH PEREZ**

BUMBLEBEE WAS IN CHARGE WHEN EVERYTHING WENT BAD.
WHEN EVERYTHING FELL APART.
SO IT HURT HIM THE MOST.
I DON'T MEAN PHYSICALLY— BAD OFF AS HE WAS, A LOT OF CYBERTRONIANS HAD IT WORSE.
NO, I MEAN THAT OTHER KIND OF HURT.
THE KIND I'VE HEARD ABOUT, WHERE IT HURTS INSIDE YOUR SPARK.
NOT ON YOUR ARMOR.
LIKE YOU LOST SOMETHING YOU DIDN'T WANT TO LOSE, AND YOU BLAME YOURSELF FOR IT.
IT'S NOT LIKE I BELONGED WITH HIS AUTOBOTS, BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO SEE BUMBLEBEE LIKE THAT...
...I RESPECTED WHAT HE DID.
WHAT HE TRIED TO DO. HE TRIED TO BUILD A WHOLE NEW CYBERTRON.
ONE WHERE AUTOBOTS AND DECEPTICONS WOULD BE EQUAL.
HA.
GUESS HE DID SUCCEED, IN A WAY.
BECAUSE AS DAWN ROSE OVER THE CITY OF IACON...

...STARSCREAM TOOK CONTROL OF THE CITY AND KICKED ALL THE AUTOBOTS AND DECEPTICONS OUT, EQUALLY.
THOSE THAT WILL NOT RENOUNCE THEIR ALLEGIANCES—WE WILL CAST INTO THE WILDERNESS.
ARE YOU WITH ME?
THE CROWD WAS.
THEY'D JUST WATCHED THEIR HOME GET DESTROYED BY THE WAR—FOR THE SECOND TIME.
PROWL CALLED THEM NAILS, SHORT FOR NON-ALIGNED INDIGENOUS LIFEFORMS.
(THAT'S BECAUSE HE NEEDS TO STICK A LABEL ON EVERYTHING.)
IT WAS LIKE THEY WERE ANOTHER SPECIES TO HIM.
BUT REALLY, THEY WERE JUST CYBERTRONIANS WHO DIDN'T WANT TO FIGHT ANYMORE.
WELL. MOSTLY, THEY DIDN'T WANT TO FIGHT.

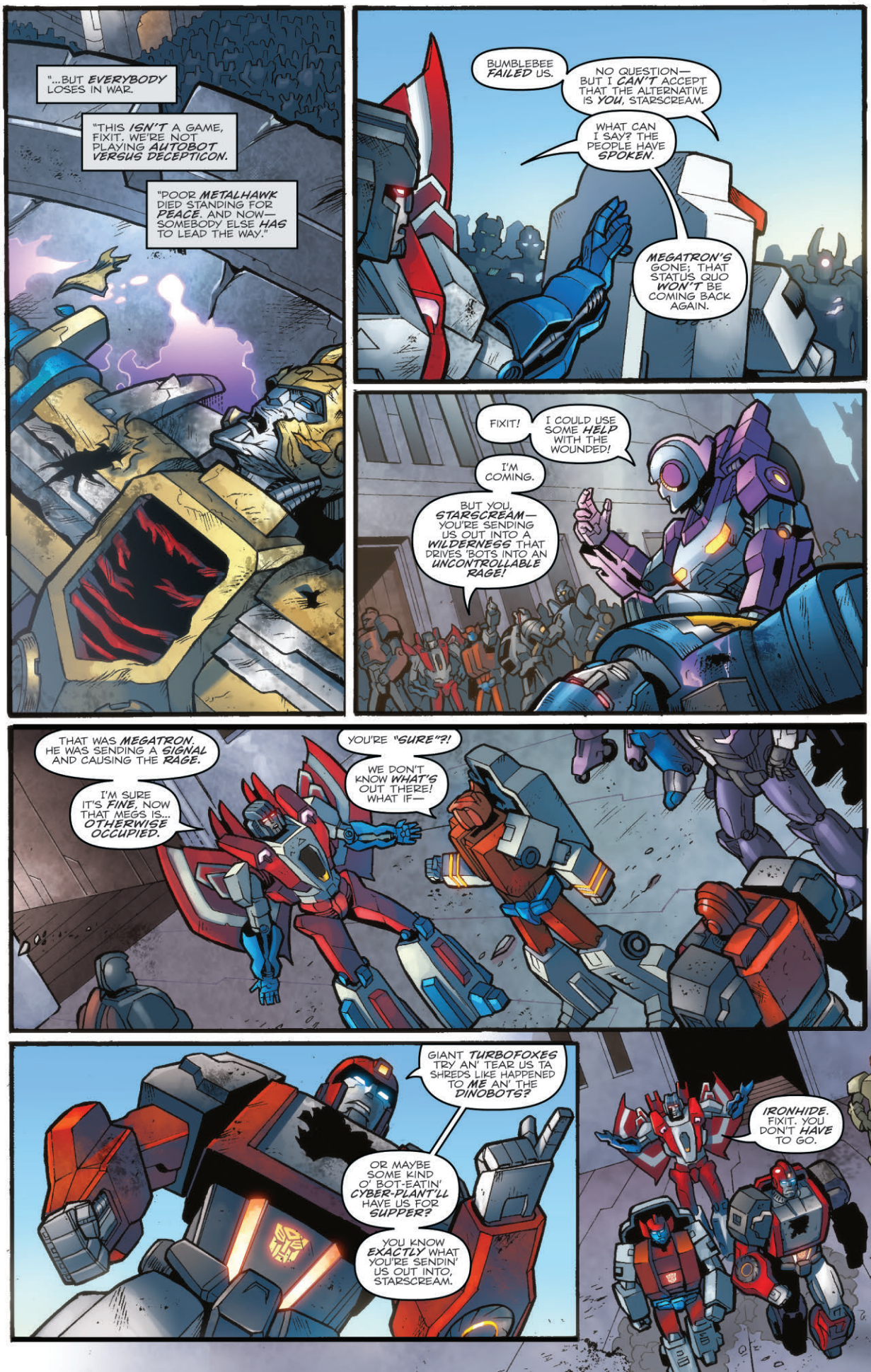

THEY JUST WANTED US GONE.
STARSCREAM— YOU CAN'T MAKE US LEAVE THE WOUNDED!
THEN STAY.
STAY AND HEAL THEM, FIXIT.


LIKE A DOCTOR SHOULD.
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS RENOUNCE YOUR ALLEGIANCE TO A FAILED CAUSE.
LOOK, I'M NOT THREATENING YOU...

"...WE'LL TAKE CARE OF THEM. FLATLINE'S NOT LEAVING; NEITHER IS QUICKMIX. THEY HAVE MEDICAL EXPERIENCE.
"AND WHEN OMEGA SUPREME OR—OR THAT THING THE AERIALBOTS COMBINED INTO—WHEN THEY'RE WELL ENOUGH, THEY'LL HAVE THE SAME CHOICE AS YOU."

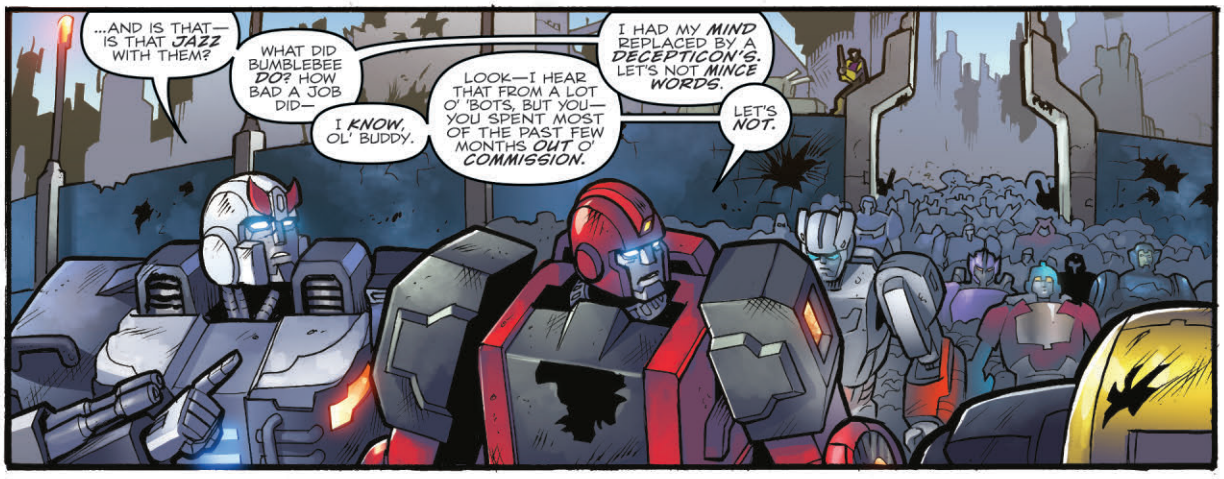
YOU CAN BE A PART OF THE WORLD YOU FOUGHT TO CREATE— A WORLD WITHOUT WAR-MAKERS.
YOU CAN STAY, AND BE A CYBERTRONIAN.
OR YOU CAN LEAVE— AND BE AN AUTOBOT.

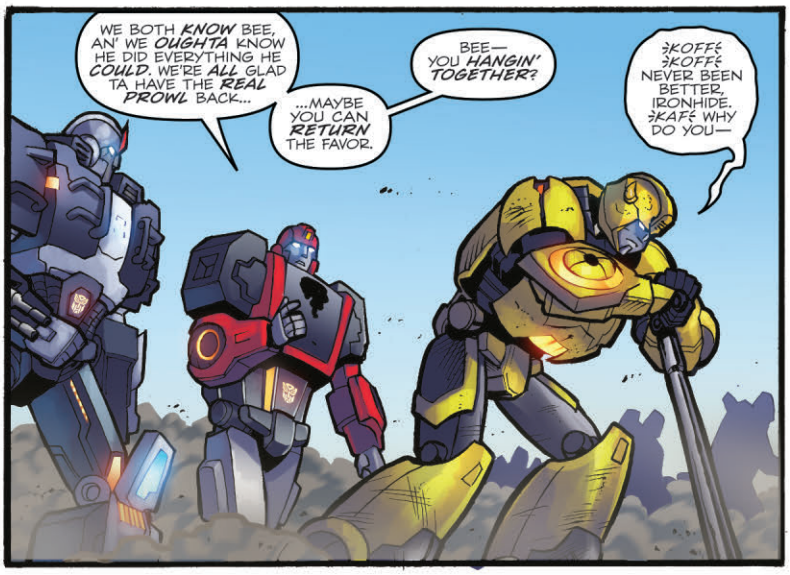
LOOK AT THEM.
BEATEN, DEFEATED— BY THE OLD STATUS QUO REARING ITS HEAD.
BUMBLEBEE... HE JUST SEES THIS AS—AS SOMETHING WITH WINNERS AND LOSERS...


"...BUT EVERYBODY LOSES IN WAR.
"THIS ISN'T A GAME, FIXIT. WE'RE NOT PLAYING AUTOBOT VERSUS DECEPTICON.
"POOR METALHAWK DIED STANDING FOR PEACE. AND NOW—SOMEBODY ELSE HAS TO LEAD THE WAY."
BUMBLEBEE FAILED US.
NO QUESTION—BUT I CAN'T ACCEPT THAT THE ALTERNATIVE IS YOU, STARSCREAM.
WHAT CAN I SAY? THE PEOPLE HAVE SPOKEN.
MEGATRON'S GONE; THAT STATUS QUO WON'T BE COMING BACK AGAIN.
FIXIT!
I COULD USE SOME HELP WITH THE WOUNDED!
I'M COMING.
BUT YOU, STARSCREAM—YOU'RE SENDING US OUT INTO A WILDERNESS THAT DRIVES 'BOTS INTO AN UNCONTROLLABLE RAGE!
THAT WAS MEGATRON. HE WAS SENDING A SIGNAL AND CAUSING THE RAGE.
I'M SURE IT'S FINE, NOW THAT MEGS IS... OTHERWISE OCCUPIED.
YOU'RE "SURE"?!
WE DON'T KNOW WHAT'S OUT THERE! WHAT IF—
GIANT TURBOFOXES TRY AN' TEAR US TA SHREDS LIKE HAPPENED TO ME AN' THE DINOBOTS?
OR MAYBE SOME KIND O' BOT-EATIN' CYBER-PLANT'LL HAVE US FOR SUPPER?
YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU'RE SENDIN' US OUT INTO, STARSCREAM.
IRONHIDE. FIXIT. YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO.

BUT FIXIT AND IRONHIDE *BOTH* WENT.
ALL OF US DID.
ALL THE *FIGHTERS*, I MEAN.
IF WE *STAYED*, WE'D BE BATTLING *INNOCENT* PEOPLE WHOSE ONLY WRONGDOING WAS NOT WANTING TO BE DESTROYED BY OUR WAR.
SO WE LEFT.
*AUTOBOTS* IN ONE DIRECTION, *DECEPTICONS* THE OTHER.
WE COULD HAVE GONE OUTSIDE AND STARTED *FIGHTING* AGAIN. I MEAN, NOTHING WAS STOPPING US.
BUT NOBODY WANTED TO TRY *MEGATRON'S* WAY AGAIN.
NOT TODAY.
SECOND EXODUS

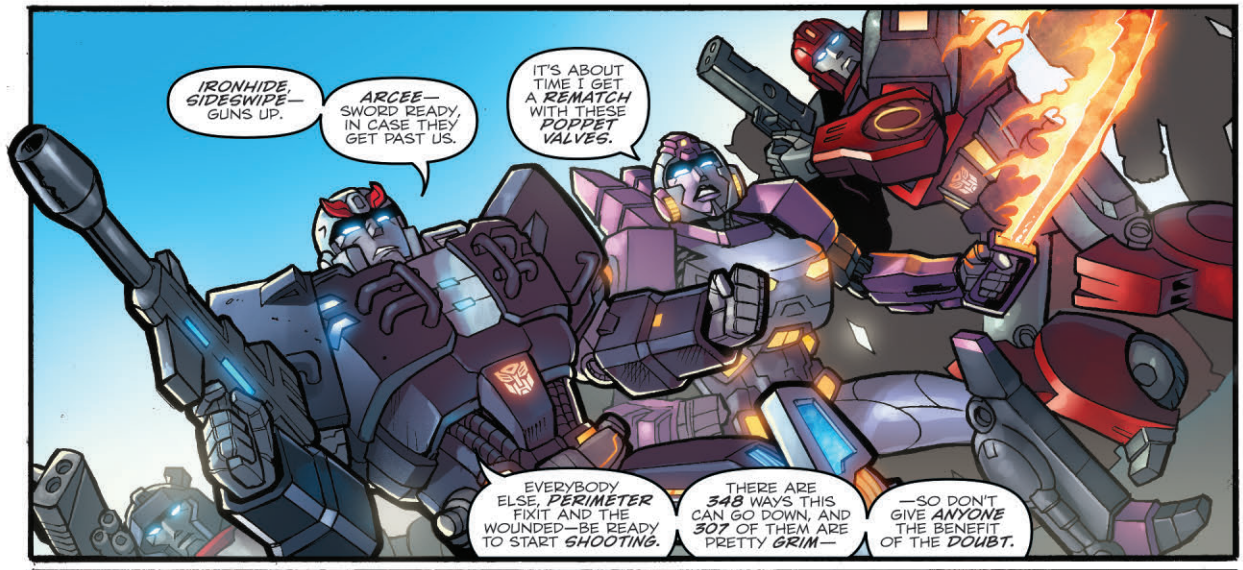
"BACK THERE... DO YOU SEE THEM?
"GUARDS. GUARDS MAKING SURE WE LEAVE THE CITY WE BUILT..."


...AND IS THAT— IS THAT JAZZ WITH THEM?
WHAT DID BUMBLEBEE DO? HOW BAD A JOB DID—
I KNOW, OL' BUDDY.
LOOK—I HEAR THAT FROM A LOT O' 'BOTS, BUT YOU— YOU SPENT MOST OF THE PAST FEW MONTHS OUT O' COMMISSION.
I HAD MY MIND REPLACED BY A DECEPTICON'S. LET'S NOT MINCE WORDS.
LET'S NOT.

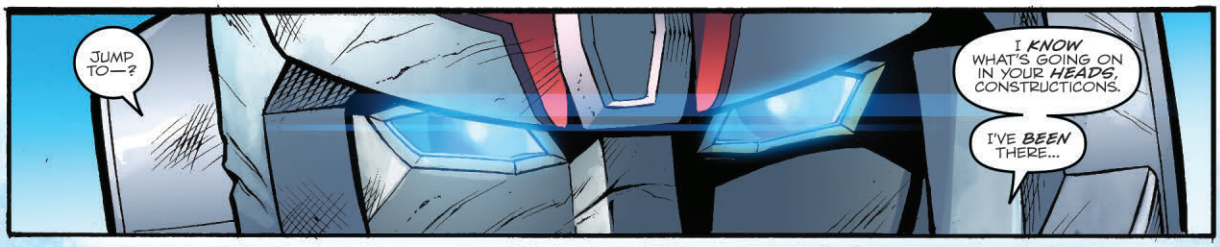

WE BOTH KNOW BEE, AN' WE OUGHTA KNOW HE DID EVERYTHING HE COULD. WE'RE ALL GLAD TA HAVE THE REAL PROWL BACK...
...MAYBE YOU CAN RETURN THE FAVOR.
BEE— YOU HANGIN' TOGETHER?
KOFF KOFF NEVER BEEN BETTER, IRONHIDE. KAF WHY DO YOU—

—HANG ON. LOOKS KOFF LOOKS LIKE WE GOT COMPANY...

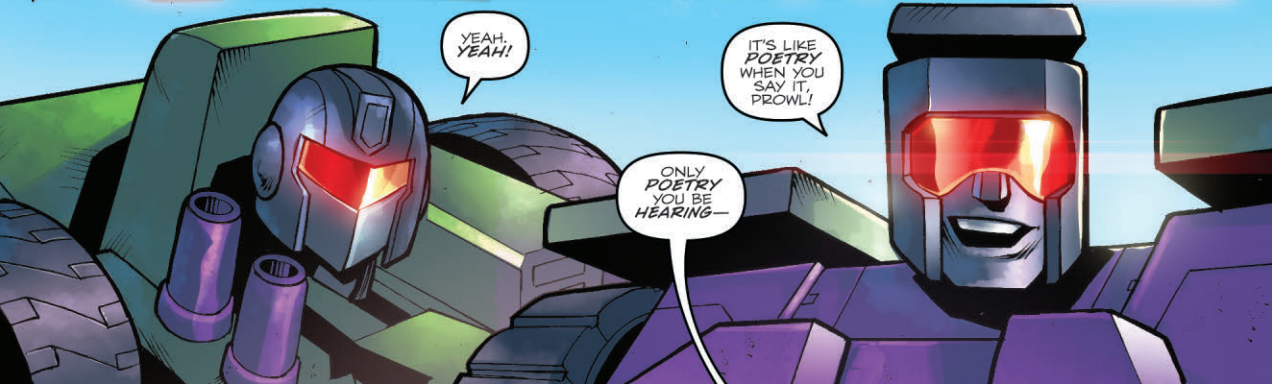
CONSTRUCTICONS. ALL OF 'EM.
I KNEW IT KOFF KOFF— THE DECEPTICONS ARE GOING TO KOFF KOFF ATTACK US WHEN WE'RE AT OUR WEAKEST.


IRONHIDE, SIDESWIPE— GUNS UP.
ARCEE— SWORD READY, IN CASE THEY GET PAST US.
IT'S ABOUT TIME I GET A REMATCH WITH THESE POPPET VALVES.
EVERYBODY ELSE, PERIMETER FIXIT AND THE WOUNDED—BE READY TO START SHOOTING.
THERE ARE 348 WAYS THIS CAN GO DOWN, AND 307 OF THEM ARE PRETTY GRIM—
—SO DON'T GIVE ANYONE THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT.

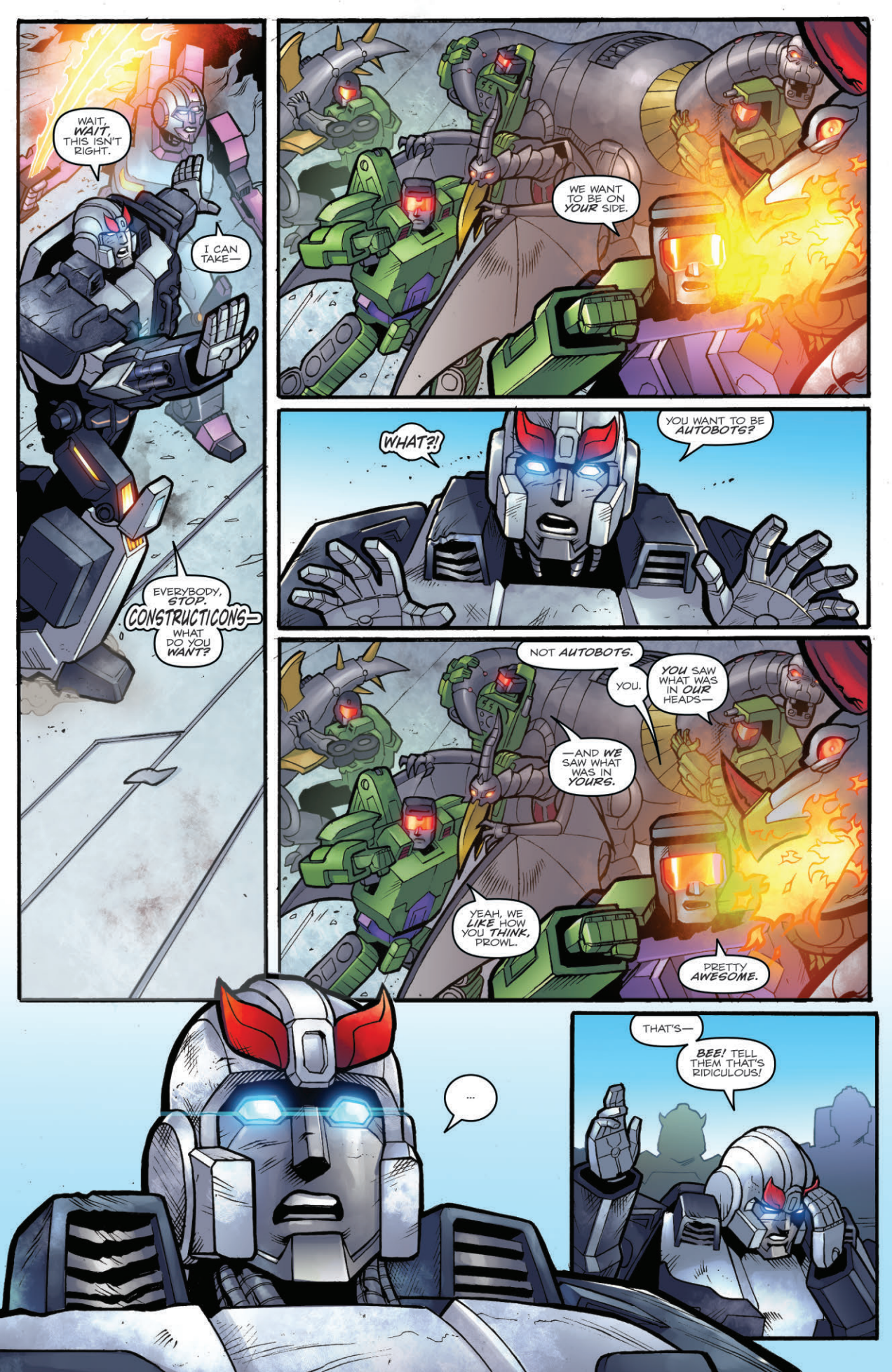
HEY THERE!
YOU GOT US WRONG.
DON'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS.

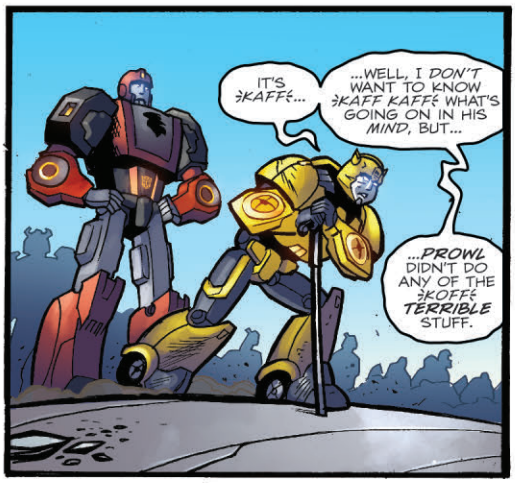

JUMP TO—?
I KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON IN YOUR HEADS, CONSTRUCTICONS.
I'VE BEEN THERE...

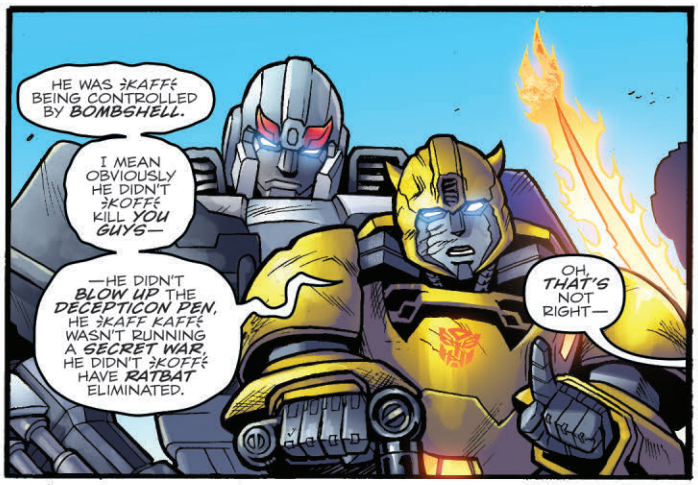
"...I JUST SPENT HALF THE NIGHT TRAPPED AS DEVASTATOR, WITH YOU FIVE—
"—YOU'RE THE WORST OF THE WORST—THE CRUELEST, VILEST DECEPTICONS I'VE EVER ENCOUNTERED."

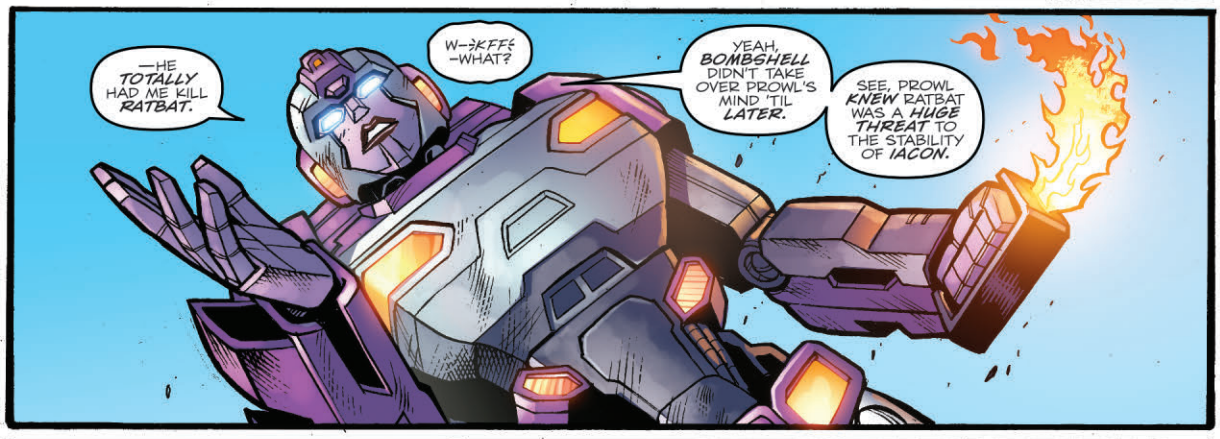

YEAH, YEAH!
IT'S LIKE POETRY WHEN YOU SAY IT, PROWL!
ONLY POETRY YOU BE HEARING—

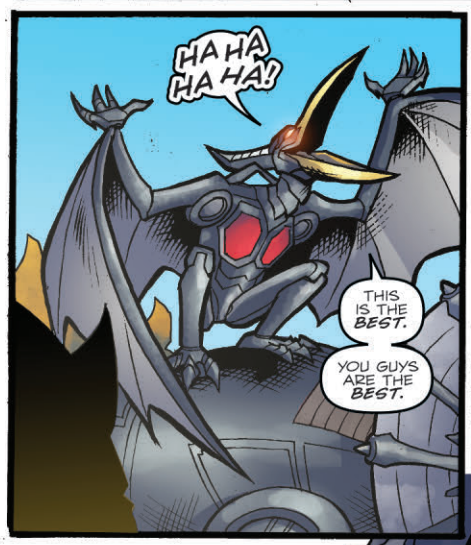
—IS ME STOMPING YOU!
UH, GOOD ONE, BOSS.
HOW ?KOFF? HOW DID THEY GET AHEAD OF US ?KFF KOFF?
EASY, BEE.
THEY'RE DINOBOTS. THEY DO STUFF LIKE THAT.
WELL, I LIKED YOUR JOKE, HORN-HEAD—
OOFF!
—BUT THIS AIN'T THE TIME FOR JOKIN'.
WATCH YOUR BLASTER!
I'M AIMIN' HIGH!
WHY'S YA AIMIN' HIGH?


WAIT, WAIT, THIS ISN'T RIGHT.
I CAN TAKE—
EVERYBODY, STOP. CONSTRUCTICONS— WHAT DO YOU WANT?
WE WANT TO BE ON YOUR SIDE.
WHAT?!
YOU WANT TO BE AUTOBOTS?
NOT AUTOBOTS.
YOU.
YOU SAW WHAT WAS IN OUR HEADS—
—AND WE SAW WHAT WAS IN YOURS.
YEAH, WE LIKE HOW YOU THINK, PROWL.
PRETTY AWESOME.
...
THAT'S—
BEE! TELL THEM THAT'S RIDICULOUS!


IT'S ⤭KAFF⤬...
...WELL, I DON'T WANT TO KNOW ⤭KAFF KAFF⤬ WHAT'S GOING ON IN HIS MIND, BUT...
...PROWL DIDN'T DO ANY OF THE ⤭KOFF⤬ TERRIBLE STUFF.


HE WAS ⤭KAFF⤬ BEING CONTROLLED BY BOMBSHELL.
I MEAN OBVIOUSLY HE DIDN'T ⤭KOFF⤬ KILL YOU GUYS—
—HE DIDN'T BLOW UP THE DECEPTICON PEN, HE ⤭KAFF KAFF⤬ WASN'T RUNNING A SECRET WAR, HE DIDN'T ⤭KOFF⤬ HAVE RATBAT ELIMINATED.
OH, THAT'S NOT RIGHT—

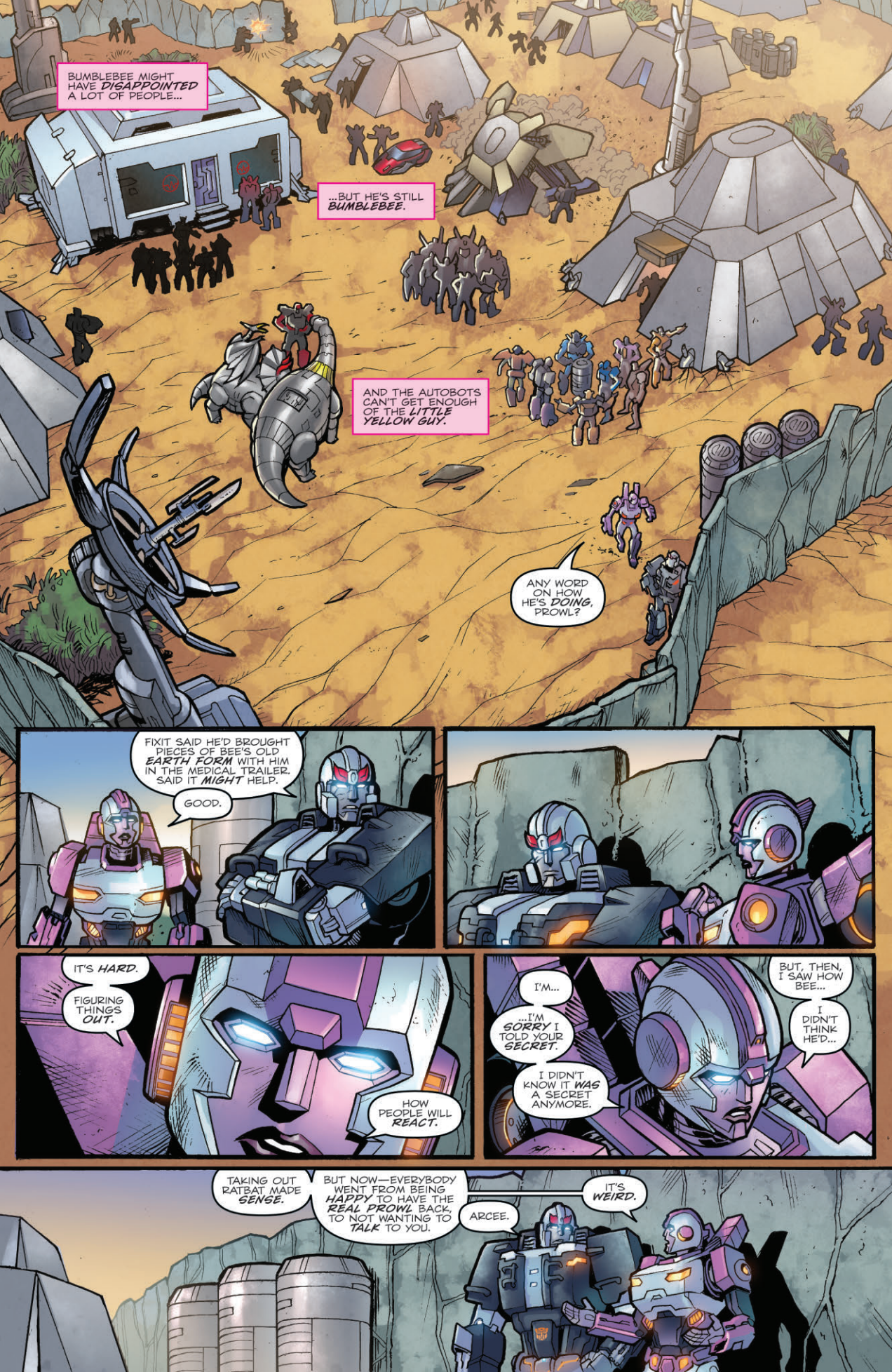

—HE TOTALLY HAD ME KILL RATBAT.
W—⤭KFF⤬ —WHAT?
YEAH, BOMBSHELL DIDN'T TAKE OVER PROWL'S MIND 'TIL LATER.
SEE, PROWL KNEW RATBAT WAS A HUGE THREAT TO THE STABILITY OF IACON.

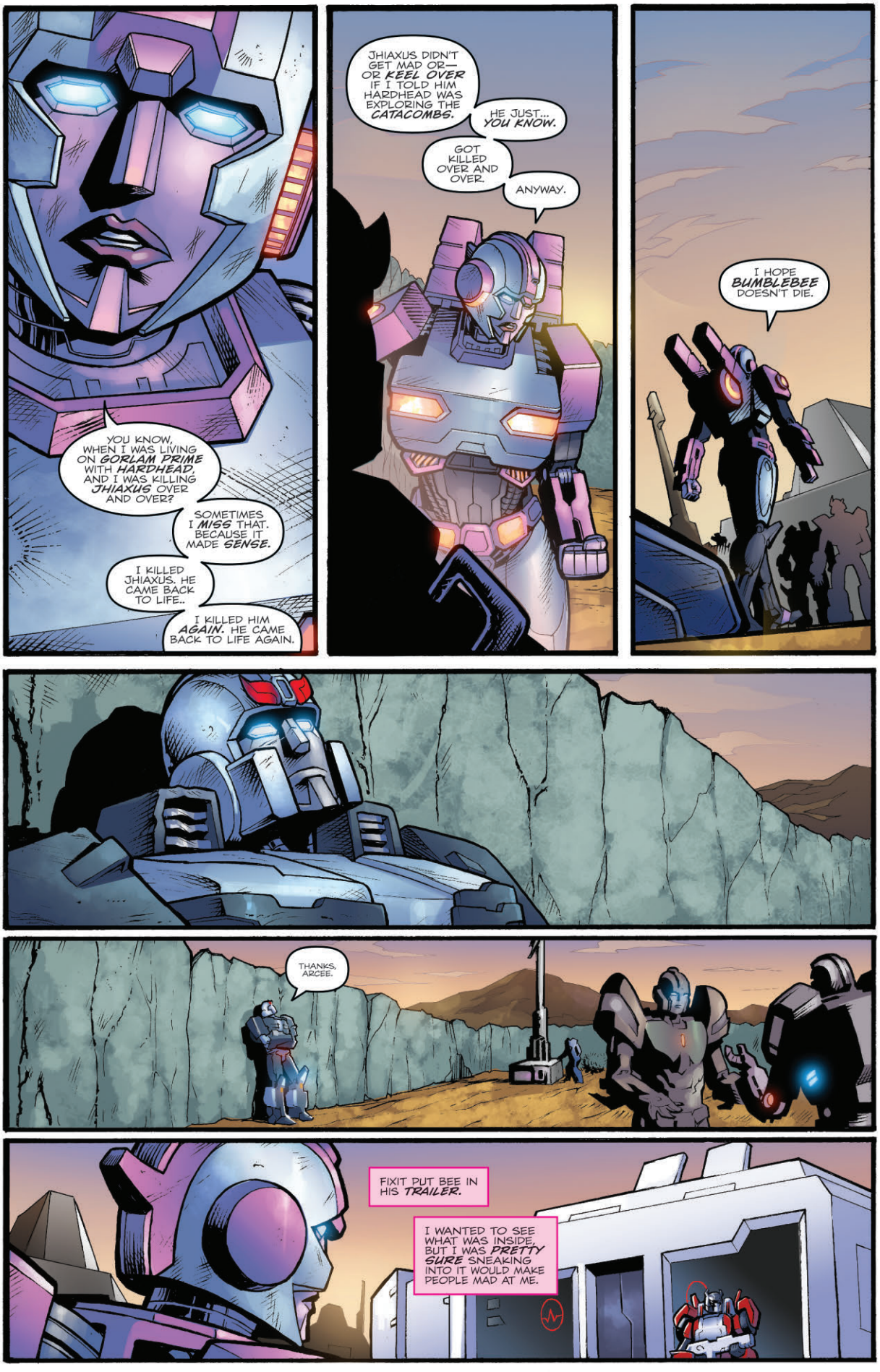

HA HA HA HA!
THIS IS THE BEST.
YOU GUYS ARE THE BEST.

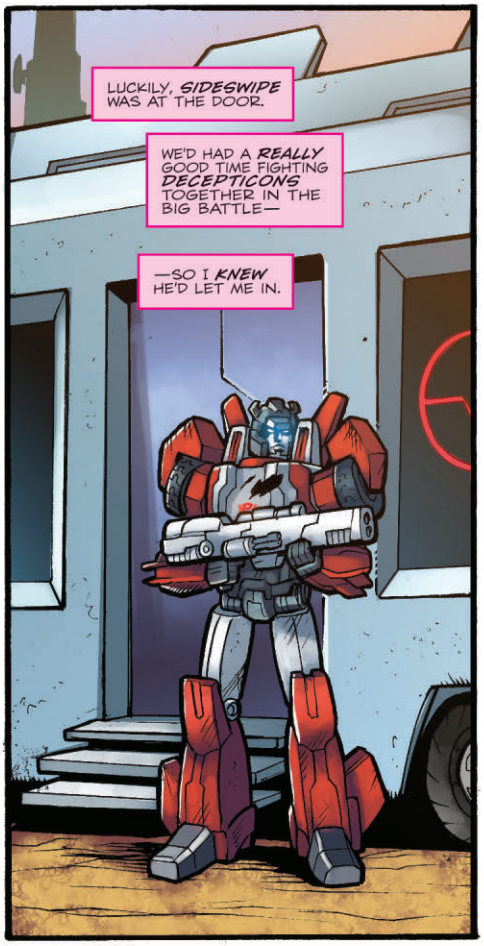
AW. AN' EVERYTHING WAS GOIN' SO WELL...
PROWL. WHY— WHAT—
⤭KOF KOFFF⤬
⤭KOFF KAF⤬

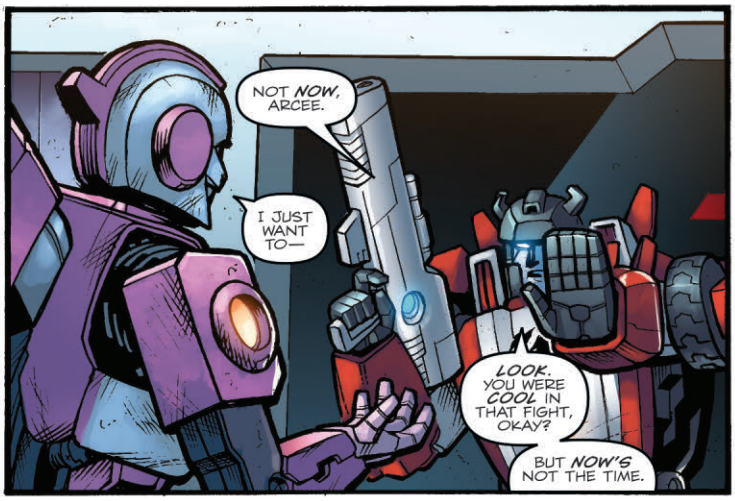
⤭KAF KAF⤬
NNNGGGGH...

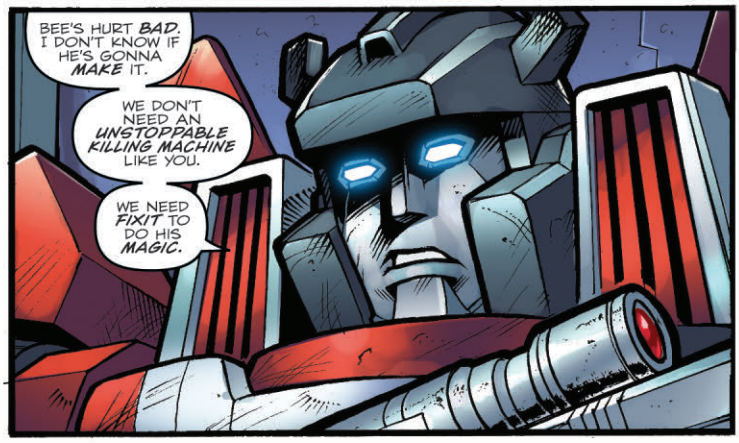
FIXIT— GET YER CHASSIS OVER HERE!
AND FIXIT RAN LIKE I'D NEVER SEEN ANYBODY RUN.

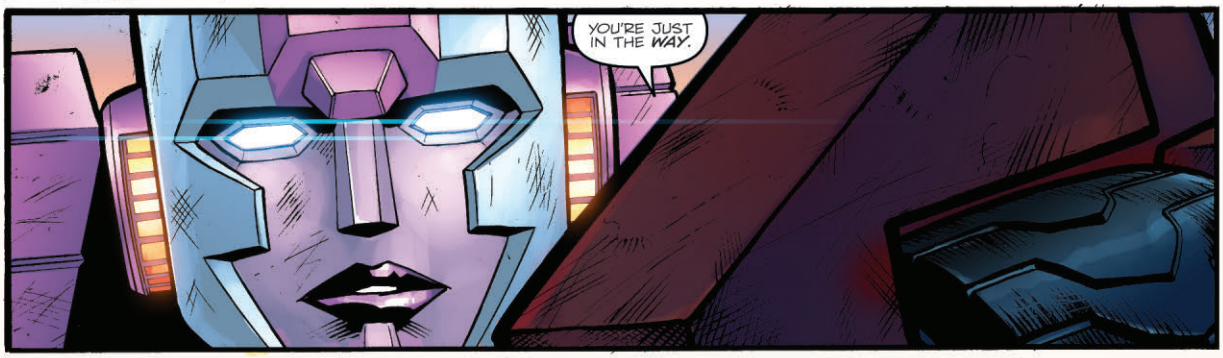

BUMBLEBEE MIGHT HAVE DISAPPOINTED A LOT OF PEOPLE...
...BUT HE'S STILL BUMBLEBEE.
AND THE AUTOBOTS CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF THE LITTLE YELLOW GUY.
ANY WORD ON HOW HE'S DOING, PROWL?
FIXIT SAID HE'D BROUGHT PIECES OF BEE'S OLD EARTH FORM WITH HIM IN THE MEDICAL TRAILER. SAID IT MIGHT HELP.
GOOD.
IT'S HARD.
FIGURING THINGS OUT.
HOW PEOPLE WILL REACT.
I'M...
...I'M SORRY I TOLD YOUR SECRET.
I DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS A SECRET ANYMORE.
BUT, THEN, I SAW HOW BEE...
I DIDN'T THINK HE'D...
TAKING OUT RATBAT MADE SENSE.
BUT NOW—EVERYBODY WENT FROM BEING HAPPY TO HAVE THE REAL PROWL BACK, TO NOT WANTING TO TALK TO YOU.
ARCEE.
IT'S WEIRD.

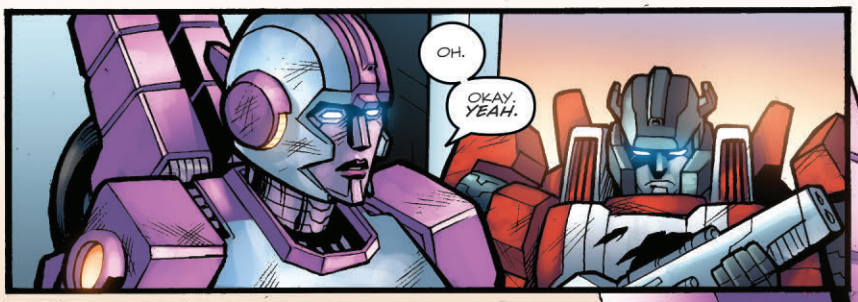

YOU KNOW, WHEN I WAS LIVING ON GORLAM PRIME WITH HARDHEAD, AND I WAS KILLING JHIAXUS OVER AND OVER?
SOMETIMES I MISS THAT. BECAUSE IT MADE SENSE.
I KILLED JHIAXUS. HE CAME BACK TO LIFE..
I KILLED HIM AGAIN. HE CAME BACK TO LIFE AGAIN.
JHIAXUS DIDN'T GET MAD OR— OR KEEL OVER IF I TOLD HIM HARDHEAD WAS EXPLORING THE CATACOMBS.
HE JUST... YOU KNOW.
GOT KILLED OVER AND OVER.
ANYWAY.
I HOPE BUMBLEBEE DOESN'T DIE.
THANKS, ARCEE.
FIXIT PUT BEE IN HIS TRAILER.
I WANTED TO SEE WHAT WAS INSIDE, BUT I WAS PRETTY SURE SNEAKING INTO IT WOULD MAKE PEOPLE MAD AT ME.

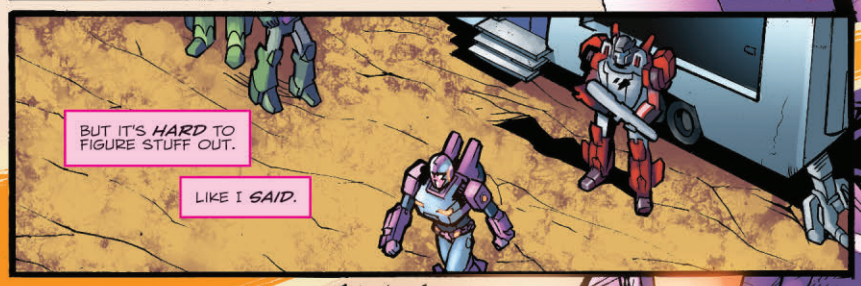

LUCKILY, SIDESWIPE WAS AT THE DOOR.
WE'D HAD A REALLY GOOD TIME FIGHTING DECEPTICONS TOGETHER IN THE BIG BATTLE—
—SO I KNEW HE'D LET ME IN.


NOT NOW, ARCEE.
I JUST WANT TO—
LOOK. YOU WERE COOL IN THAT FIGHT, OKAY?
BUT NOW'S NOT THE TIME.


BEE'S HURT BAD. I DON'T KNOW IF HE'S GONNA MAKE IT.
WE DON'T NEED AN UNSTOPPABLE KILLING MACHINE LIKE YOU.
WE NEED FIXIT TO DO HIS MAGIC.


YOU'RE JUST IN THE WAY.


OH.
OKAY. YEAH.

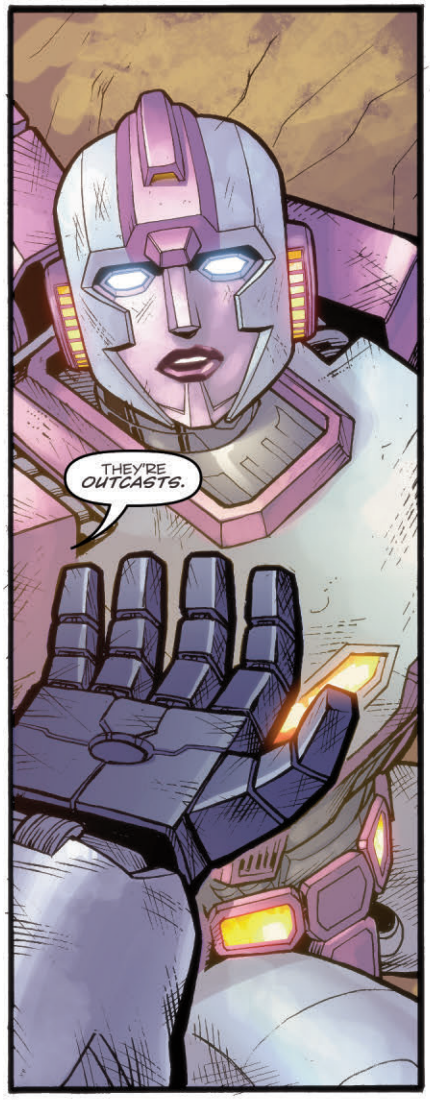

BUT IT'S HARD TO FIGURE STUFF OUT.
LIKE I SAID.

BONK
WHAT—
OOPS.

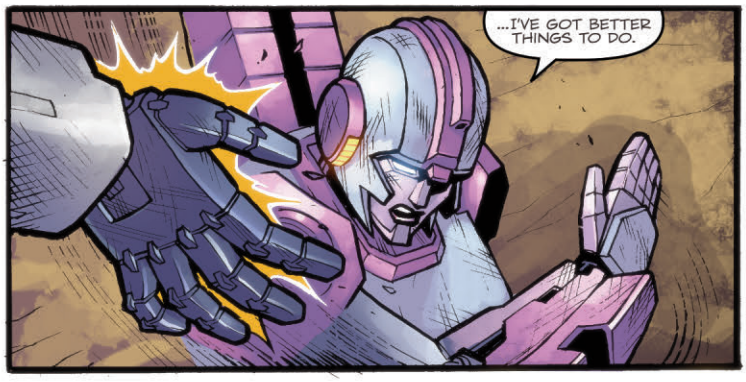
SORRY.
DIDN'T SEE YA THERE.
HEY, HOOK!
DIDN'T THAT PINK AUTOBOT SAY SOMETHIN' ABOUT "NEXT TIME," LAST TIME?
YA KNOW WHAT, MIXMASTER?
I DO BELIEVE SHE DID.
WELL, NEXT TIME'S HERE.
FINALLY.
THIS, I UNDERSTAND.
THIS, I GET.
DECEPTICONS. THE WORST KIND.
FILTHY CREATURES THAT GIVE CYBERTRONIANS A BAD NAME.
KILLING THEM, I UNDERSTAND WHOLEHEARTEDLY.
SHOULD WE, UH...
STOP THOSE MANIACS? ARE YOU KIDDING?
WE MIGHT AS WELL HAVE SOME FUN TONIGHT.

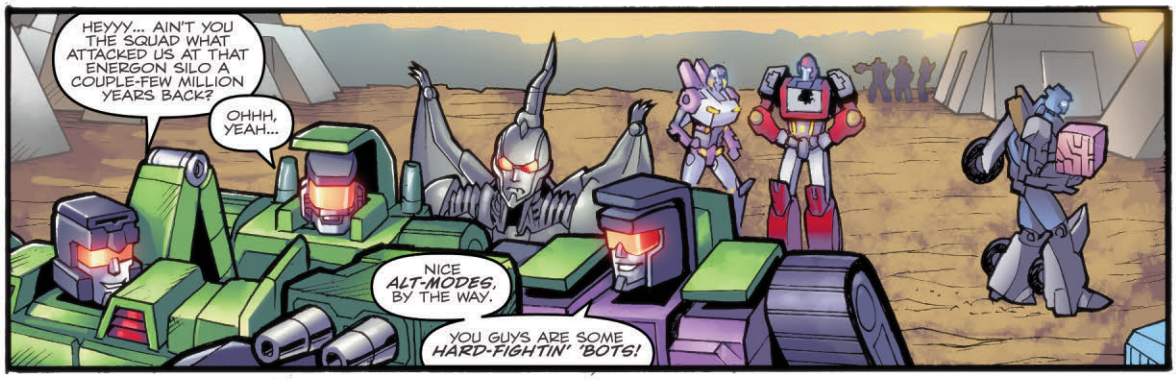
HEY, LOOK— SHE GOT NO SYMBOL!
EVEN THE AUTOBOTS DON'T WANT HER!
WHAK
YEAH? WELL, THEY GOT ME.
NOTHING IN THE UNIVERSE FEELS BETTER THAN THIS.
NOTHING.
GYAH!
HEY, HEY, HEY—

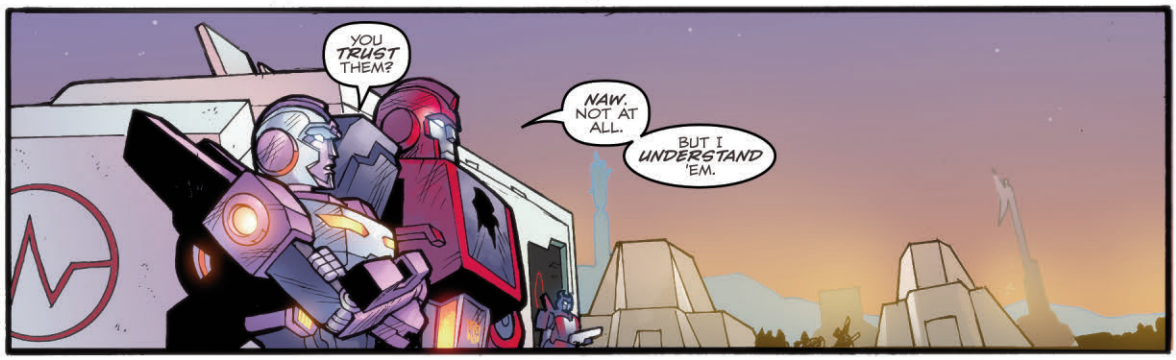
—STOP!
WHAT'S YER MALFUNCTION?
WE WERE JUST HAVIN' A LITTLE FUN.
YEAH. THESE GUYS SOUNDED LIKE THEY NEEDED TO DIE.
I SAY LET 'EM TAKE EACH OTHER OUT.
SETTLE DOWN, SWOOP.
I LIKE A GOOD SCRAP AS MUCH AS ANY 'BOT. BUT ENOUGH OF US HAVE FALLEN.
YOU FELLAS WANNA STAY HERE?
I DON'T LIKE IT, BUT I AIN'T GONNA STOP YA. NOT TODAY.
SUN'S GOIN' DOWN, AN' I RECKON THE MORE O' US THERE ARE, THE BETTER SHOT WE GOT AT MAKIN' IT THROUGH THE NIGHT.
WE HADDA MAKE CAMP HERE, AN' THIS AIN'T THE MOST SECURE PLACE.
YOU GUYS— DINOBOTS. YOU WATCH THESE SIX.
SIX? I'M NOT ONE OF THEM! THEY'RE— THEY'RE—
I SERIOUSLY WANNA HEAR THIS.


THEY'RE OUTCASTS.

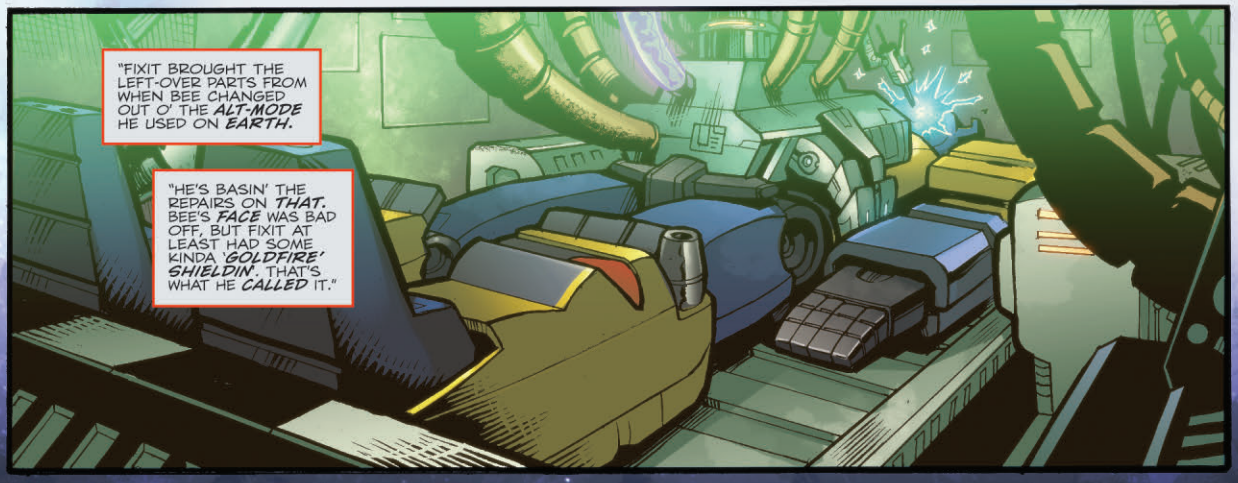
WE'RE ALL OUTCASTS.
YOU LIKE DRINKIN' ENERGON?
BEEN KNOWN TO, NOW AN' THEN.
PRACTICALLY AT A PROFESSIONAL LEVEL.
I...

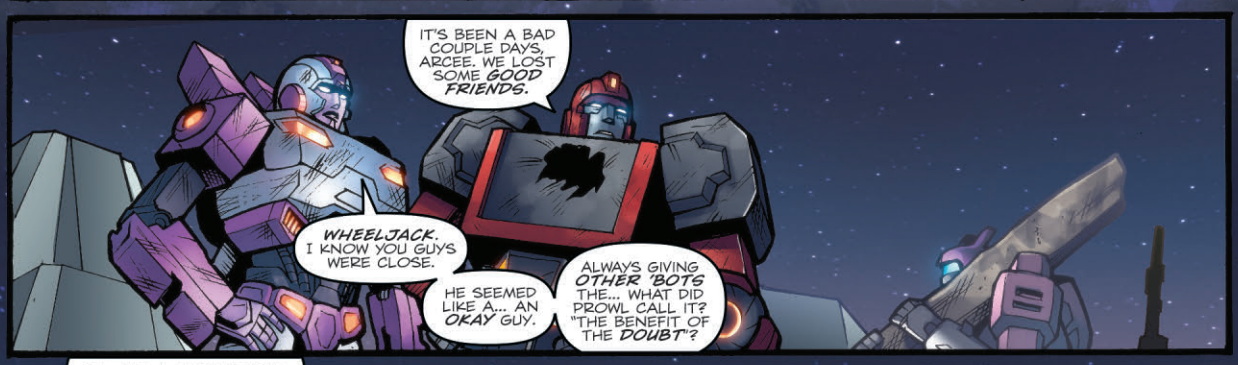

...I'VE GOT BETTER THINGS TO DO.

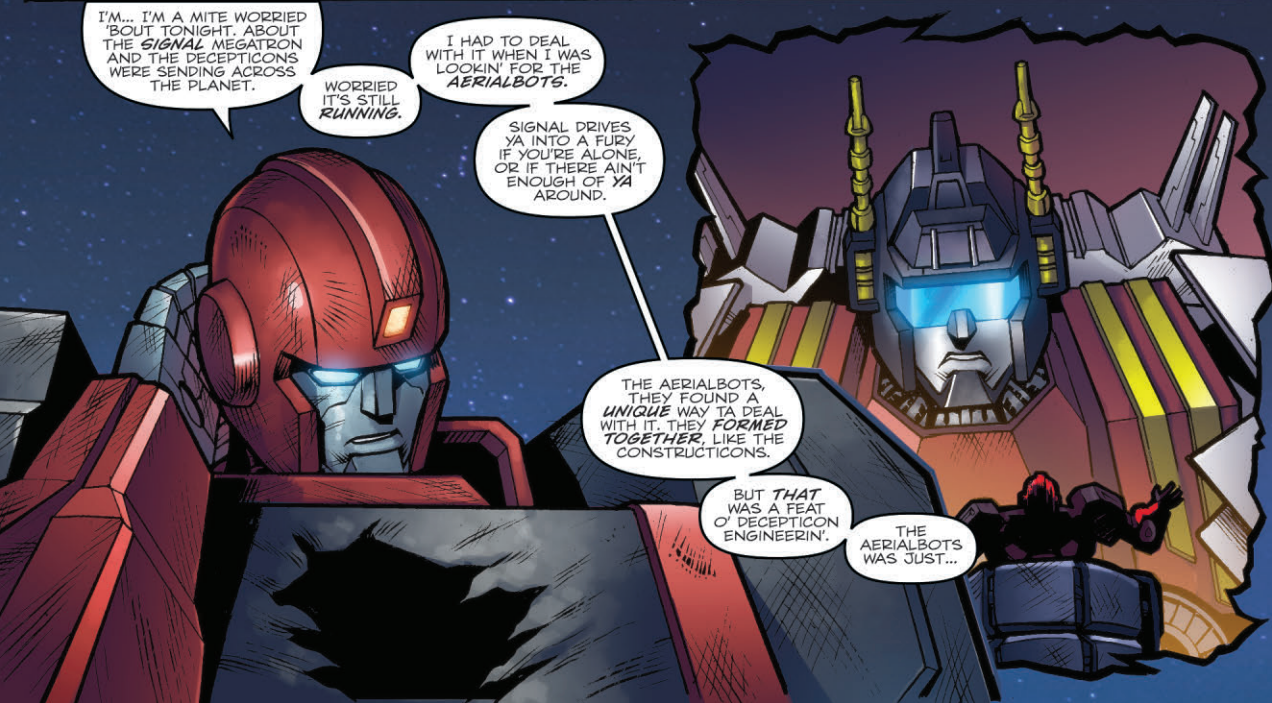

HEYYY... AIN'T YOU THE SQUAD WHAT ATTACKED US AT THAT ENERGON SILO A COUPLE-FEW MILLION YEARS BACK?
OHHH, YEAH...
NICE ALT-MODES, BY THE WAY.
YOU GUYS ARE SOME HARD-FIGHTIN' 'BOTS!


YOU TRUST THEM?
NAW. NOT AT ALL.
BUT I UNDERSTAND 'EM.

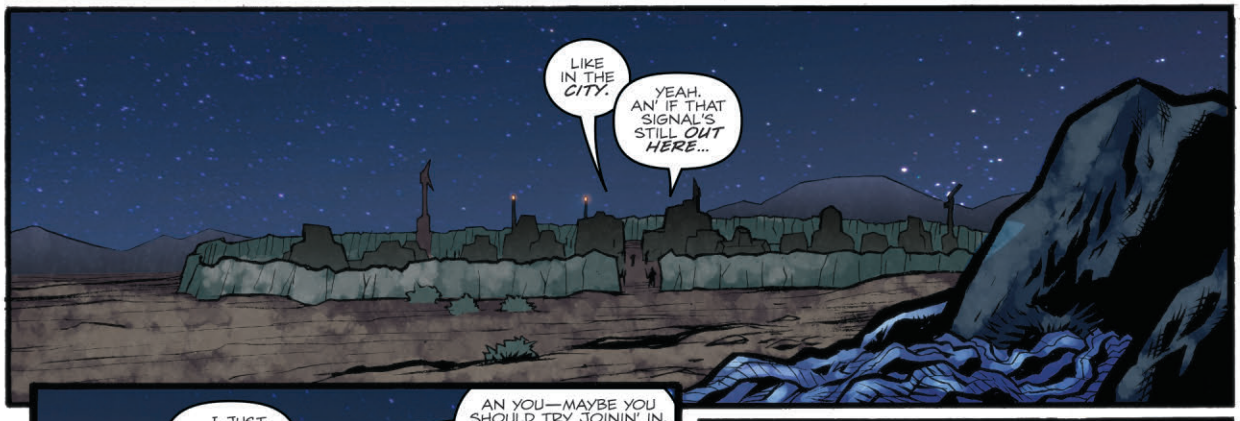
ANY NEW WORD ON BUMBLEBEE?
TOUCH AN' GO.


"FIXIT BROUGHT THE LEFT-OVER PARTS FROM WHEN BEE CHANGED OUT O' THE ALT-MODE HE USED ON EARTH.
"HE'S BASIN' THE REPAIRS ON THAT. BEE'S FACE WAS BAD OFF, BUT FIXIT AT LEAST HAD SOME KINDA 'GOLDFIRE' SHIELDIN'. THAT'S WHAT HE CALLED IT."

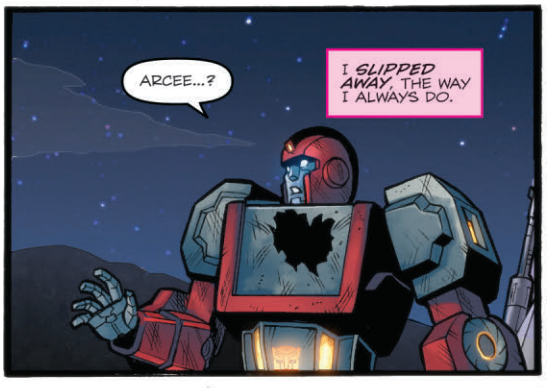

IT'S BEEN A BAD COUPLE DAYS, ARCEE. WE LOST SOME GOOD FRIENDS.
WHEELJACK. I KNOW YOU GUYS WERE CLOSE.
HE SEEMED LIKE A... AN OKAY GUY.
ALWAYS GIVING OTHER 'BOTS THE... WHAT DID PROWL CALL IT? "THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT"?

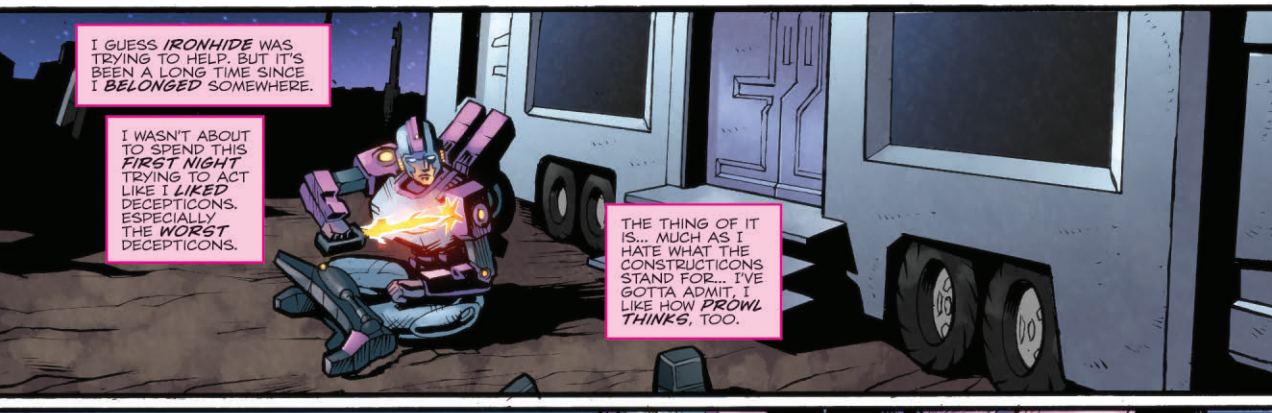

I'M... I'M A MITE WORRIED 'BOUT TONIGHT. ABOUT THE SIGNAL MEGATRON AND THE DECEPTICONS WERE SENDING ACROSS THE PLANET.
WORRIED IT'S STILL RUNNING.
I HAD TO DEAL WITH IT WHEN I WAS LOOKIN' FOR THE AERIALBOTS.
SIGNAL DRIVES YA INTO A FURY IF YOU'RE ALONE, OR IF THERE AIN'T ENOUGH OF YA AROUND.
THE AERIALBOTS, THEY FOUND A UNIQUE WAY TA DEAL WITH IT. THEY FORMED TOGETHER, LIKE THE CONSTRUCTICONS.
BUT THAT WAS A FEAT O' DECEPTICON ENGINEERIN'.
THE AERIALBOTS WAS JUST...

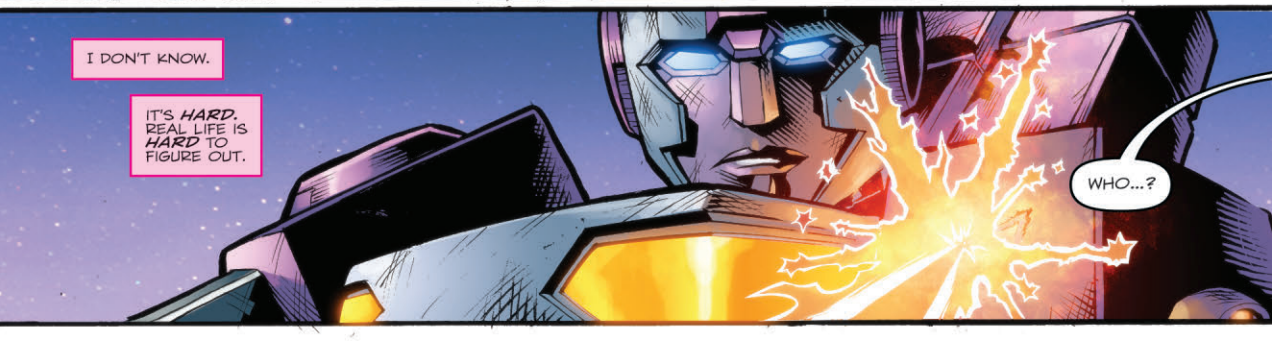
A SPONTANEOUS GESTALT.
JHIAXUS WOULD HAVE DREAMED ABOUT THAT SORT OF THING.
WHEN SUPERION—THAT'S THEIR COMBINED FORM—SHOWED UP...
...ME AN' THE DINOS CALMED DOWN.
GUESS THERE WERE ENOUGH OF US THAT THE SIGNAL COULDN'T WORK.


LIKE IN THE CITY.
YEAH. AN' IF THAT SIGNAL'S STILL OUT HERE...

...I JUST HOPE WE GOT ENOUGH TA BE PAST THAT TIPPIN' POINT.
AN YOU—MAYBE YOU SHOULD TRY JOININ' IN. CAN'T VOUCH FER THE CONSTRUCTICONS, BUT THE DINOBOTS AIN'T SO BAD, ONCE YOU GET TO KNOW 'EM.

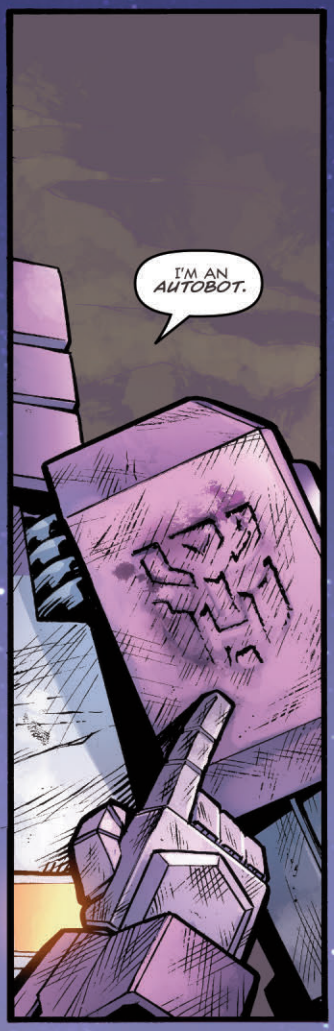

ARCEE...?
I SLIPPED AWAY, THE WAY I ALWAYS DO.


I GUESS IRONHIDE WAS TRYING TO HELP. BUT IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I BELONGED SOMEWHERE.
I WASN'T ABOUT TO SPEND THIS FIRST NIGHT TRYING TO ACT LIKE I LIKED DECEPTICONS. ESPECIALLY THE WORST DECEPTICONS.
THE THING OF IT IS... MUCH AS I HATE WHAT THE CONSTRUCTICONS STAND FOR... I'VE GOTTA ADMIT, I LIKE HOW PROWL THINKS, TOO.

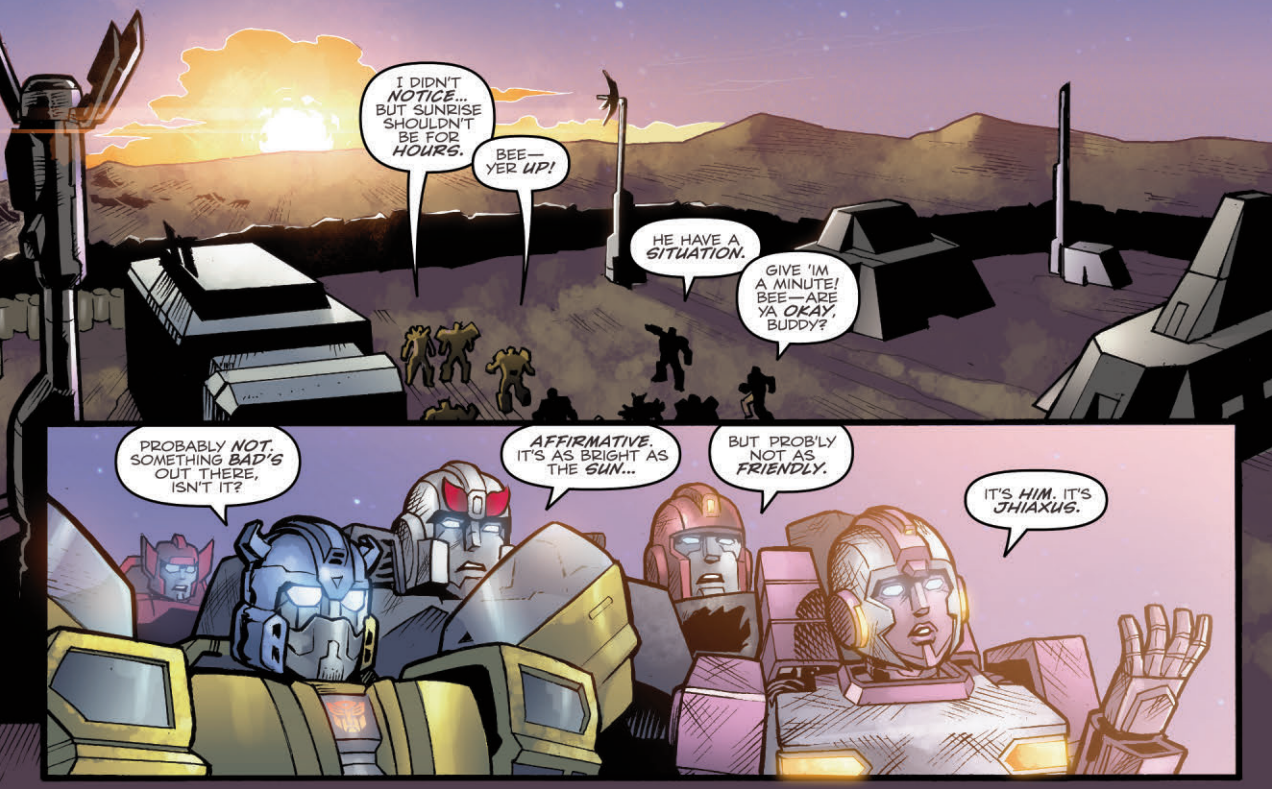

I DON'T KNOW.
IT'S HARD. REAL LIFE IS HARD TO FIGURE OUT.
WHO...?

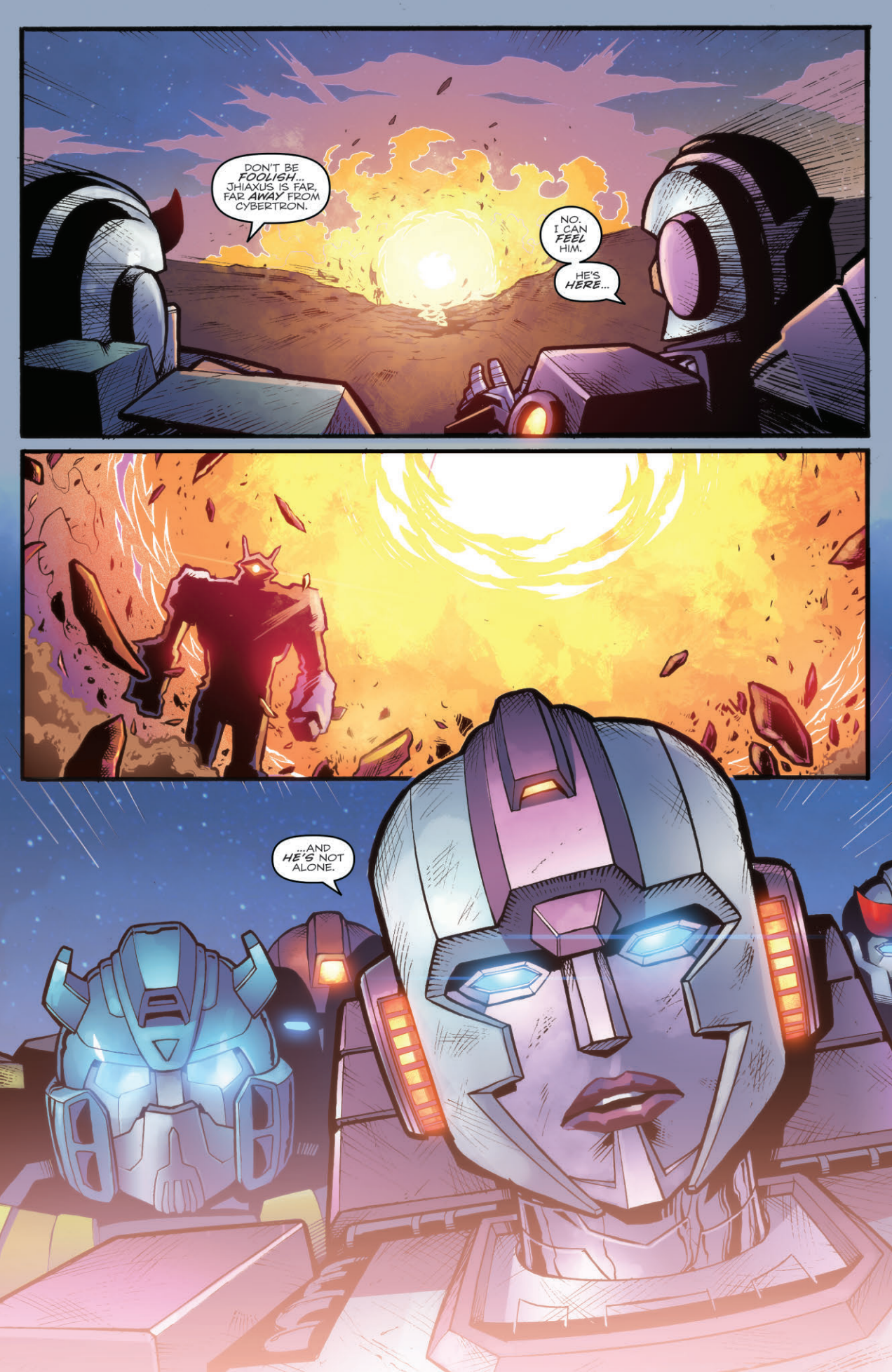
WHAT'S... ARCEE...?
BUMBLEBEE.
UM, NICE OUTFIT.
I CAN'T FEEL MY FACE. WHAT HAPPENED?
YOU COLLAPSED AND—
I MEAN, WHY ARE YOU SITTING OUTSIDE THE MEDICAL TRAILER?
EVERYBODY WAS WORRIED ABOUT THAT SIGNAL TURNING 'BOTS VIOLENT.
I FIGURED IT WOULDN'T HAVE ANY EFFECT ON ME.
SOMEBODY NEEDED TO MAKE SURE YOU WERE OKAY IF THINGS WENT BAD...

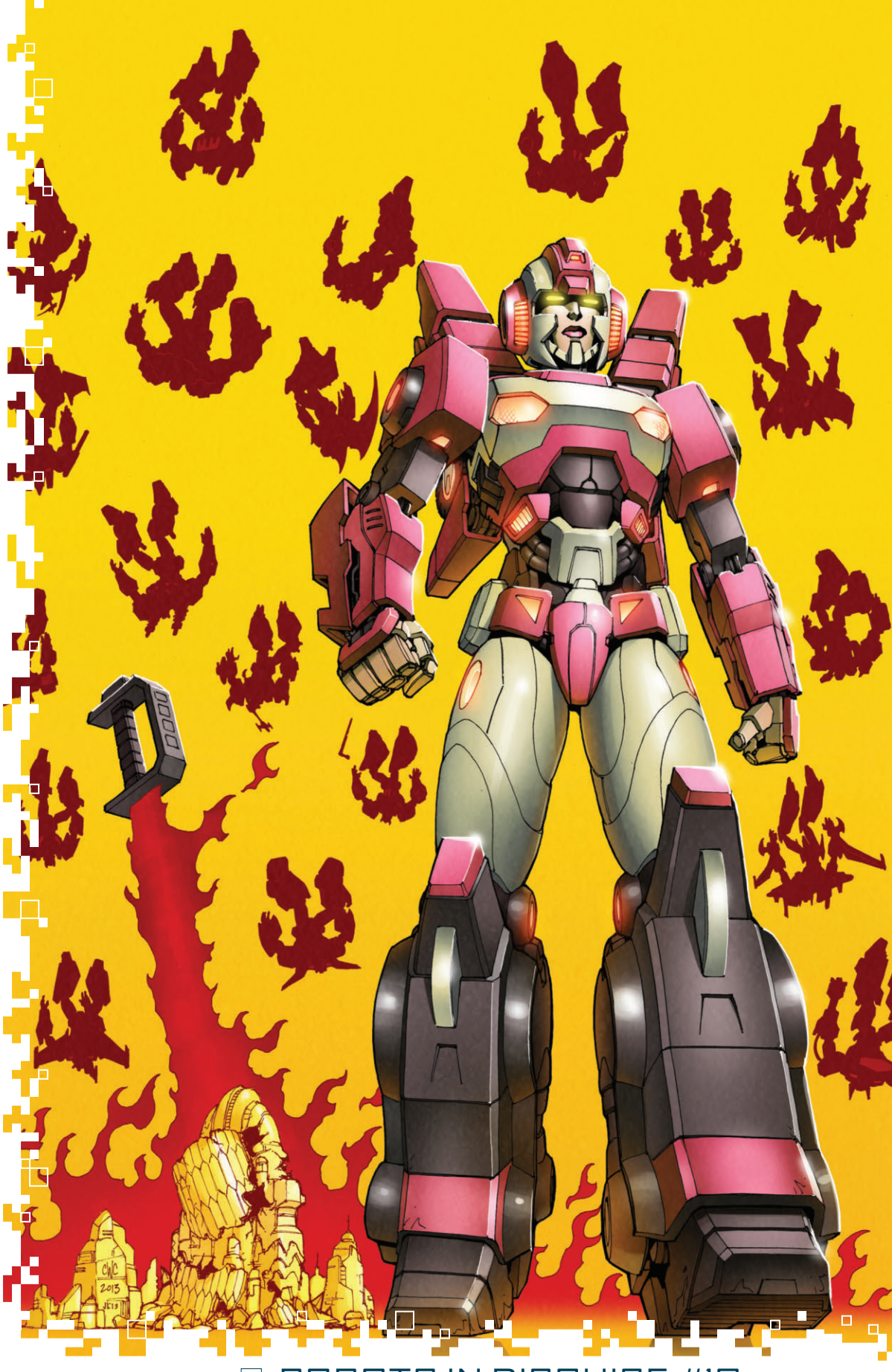
...SO I KNOCKED OUT SIDESWIPE.
HE COULD USE THE REST— I MEAN, HE TOOK SOME HITS IN THE FIGHT. BODY NEEDS DOWN-TIME TO FIX ITSELF.
ERM. WHAT'S THAT ON YOUR ARM?


I'M AN AUTOBOT.

UM.
WE... I GUESS WE MADE IT THROUGH THE NIGHT.
HUH?
THE DAWN. THE SUN'S RISING.


I DIDN'T NOTICE... BUT SUNRISE SHOULDN'T BE FOR HOURS.
BEE— YER UP!
HE HAVE A SITUATION.
GIVE 'IM A MINUTE! BEE—ARE YA OKAY, BUDDY?
PROBABLY NOT. SOMETHING BAD'S OUT THERE, ISN'T IT?
AFFIRMATIVE. IT'S AS BRIGHT AS THE SUN...
BUT PROB'LY NOT AS FRIENDLY.
IT'S HIM. IT'S JHIAXUS.


DON'T BE FOOLISH... JHIAXUS IS FAR, FAR AWAY FROM CYBERTRON.
NO. I CAN FEEL HIM.
HE'S HERE...
...AND HE'S NOT ALONE.




ROBOTS IN DISGUISE #18 COVER B

by **CASEY W. COLLER** Colors by **JOANA LAFUENTE**

ROBOTS IN DISGUISE #19 COVER A

by **DHEERAJ VERMA** COLORS BY **JOANA LAFUENTE**

WASPINATOR DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU WANT FROM HIM.

YOU ALREADY KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.

IT WAS ZZO LONG AGO...

...WHY WON'T YOU LET WASPINATOR FORGET?

"WASPINATOR WAZZ A HUNTER. YOU KNOW THAT. WE WERE ALL HUNTERZZ...

"WASPINATOR HAD NEVER... NEVER BELIEVED. WASPINATOR THOUGHT THEY WERE MYTHZZ.

"STORIEZZ ABOUT PRIMUS' SERVANTZZZ...

"...UNTIL OPTIMUS PRIME RAIZZED A TITAN FROM THE GROUND OF CYBERTRON."

ARISE.

"AND MEGATRON DEZZIRED ONE...

"...SO WE BECAME TITAN HUNTERZZ.

"REMEMBER HOW LONG WE ZZEARCHED? BUT YOU WERE GONE BY WHEN WASPINATOR FOUND ONE.

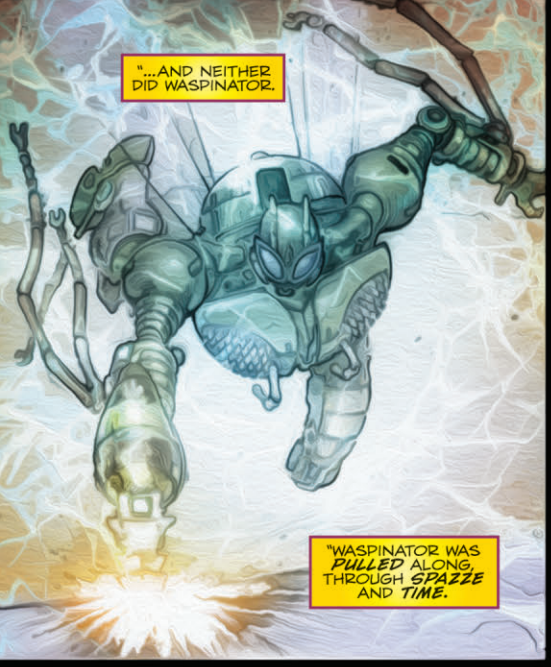
"WASPINATOR KNEW HE HAD TO MURDER IT, ZZO SHOCKWAVE COULD HARVEST THE SPACE BRIDGE INSIDE."

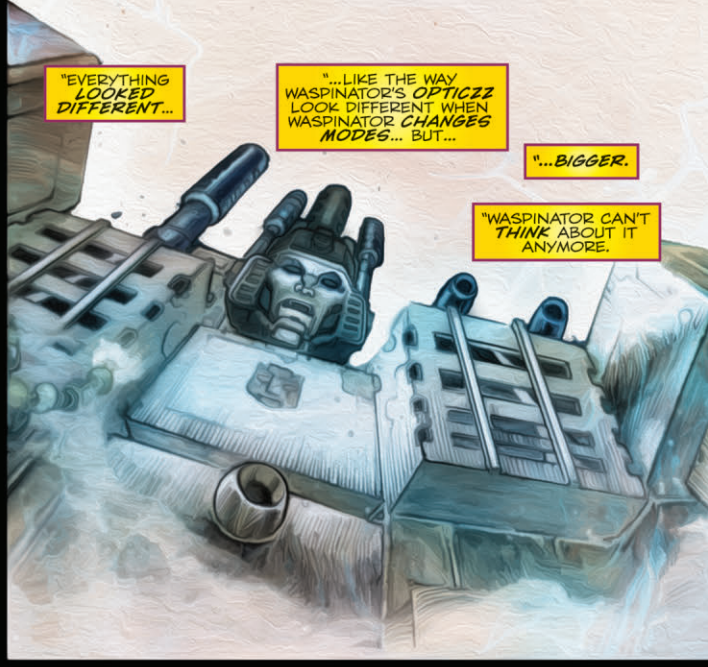
AND THEN...

...AND THEN...

...THE WORZZT THING HAPPENED. THE WORZZT THING THAT COULD EVER HAPPEN TO WASPINATOR, HAPPENED...

"...WASPINATOR SUCCEEDED.
"THE TITAN PANICKED.
"IT OPENED A SPACE BRIDGE, BUT... IT DIDN'T KNOW WHERE IT WAZZ GOING...


"...AND NEITHER DID WASPINATOR.
"WASPINATOR WAS PULLED ALONG, THROUGH SPAZZE AND TIME.

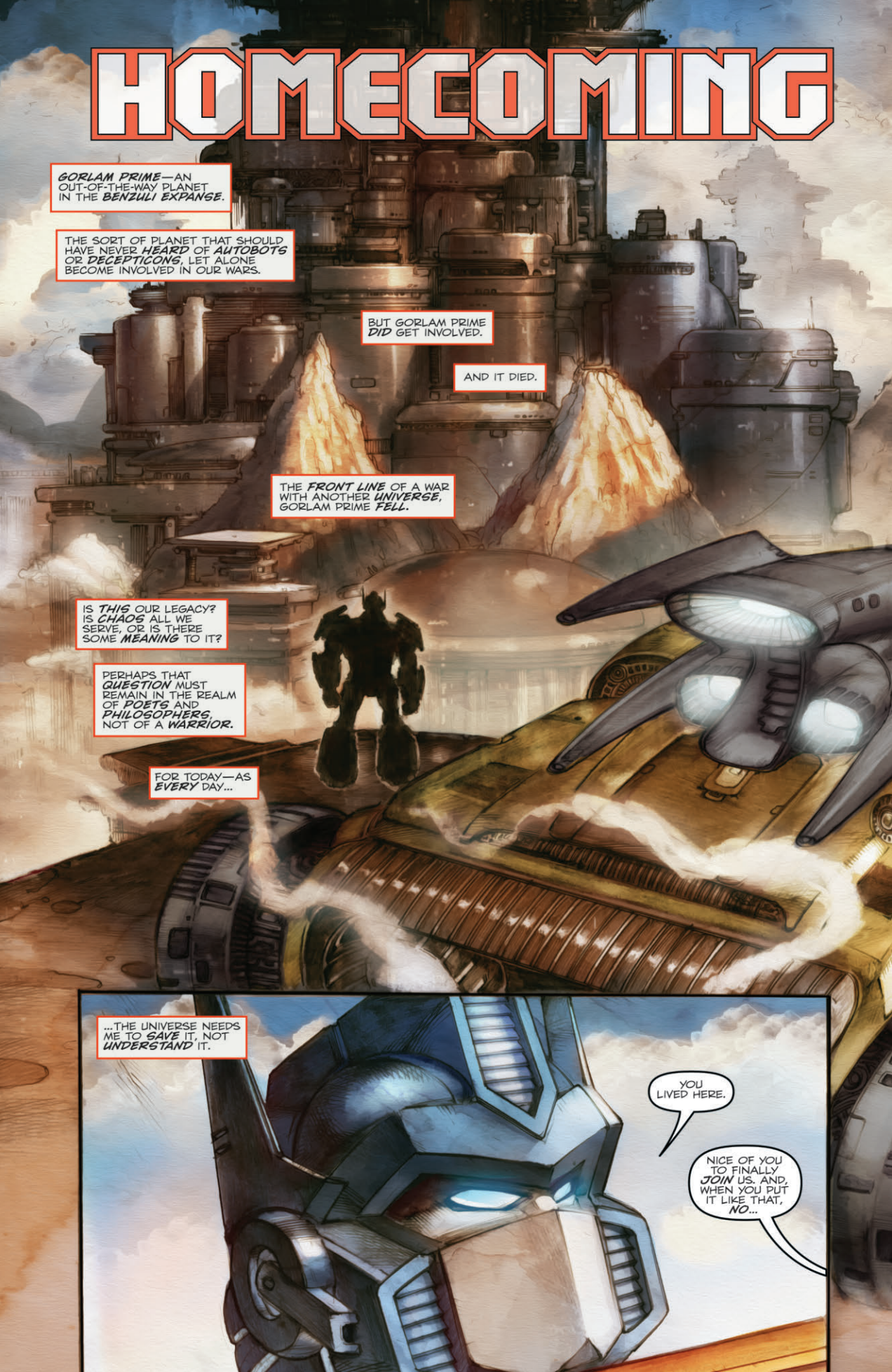

"EVERYTHING LOOKED DIFFERENT...
"...LIKE THE WAY WASPINATOR'S OPTICZZ LOOK DIFFERENT WHEN WASPINATOR CHANGES MODES... BUT...
"...BIGGER.
"WASPINATOR CAN'T THINK ABOUT IT ANYMORE.

"THE CREATURE... THE TITAN...
"...ITZZ SPARK DIMMED... THE DAMAGE WASPINATOR HAD DONE TO IT...
"...WAZZ TOO MUCH.

"WASPINATOR WAZZ OUT OF CONTROL... ADRIFT WITH THE TITAN... UNTIL... SOMEHOW... IMPOZZIBLY...
"...WASPINATOR CONTROLLED IT.
"WASPINATOR ... FELT SOMETHING. ZZOMEWHERE WASPINATOR COULD AIM FOR."

WASPINATOR THOUGHT IT WAZZ LIFE—BUT IT WAZZN'T.
IT WAZZ DEATH. WASPINATOR FOUND DEATH ITZZELF.
DEATH, INDEED...

...AND WHAT DID YOU SAY TO MY OLD FRIEND?
BLUDGEON. PLEASE.
HE'S JUST GETTING TO THE GOOD PART.
YOU CONTROLLED A TITAN ONCE. TELL ME, WASPINATOR—
—CAN YOU DO IT AGAIN?


HOMECOMING
GORLAM PRIME—AN OUT-OF-THE-WAY PLANET IN THE BENZULI EXPANSE.
THE SORT OF PLANET THAT SHOULD HAVE NEVER HEARD OF AUTOBOTS OR DECEPTICONS, LET ALONE BECOME INVOLVED IN OUR WARS.
BUT GORLAM PRIME DID GET INVOLVED.
AND IT DIED.
THE FRONT LINE OF A WAR WITH ANOTHER UNIVERSE, GORLAM PRIME FELL.
IS THIS OUR LEGACY? IS CHAOS ALL WE SERVE, OR IS THERE SOME MEANING TO IT?
PERHAPS THAT QUESTION MUST REMAIN IN THE REALM OF POETS AND PHILOSOPHERS, NOT OF A WARRIOR.
FOR TODAY—AS EVERY DAY...
...THE UNIVERSE NEEDS ME TO SAVE IT, NOT UNDERSTAND IT.
YOU LIVED HERE.
NICE OF YOU TO FINALLY JOIN US. AND, WHEN YOU PUT IT LIKE THAT, NO...

...I DIDN'T EXACTLY LIVE HERE.
THIS WAS EIGHT, NINE YEARS AGO? JHIAXUS AND THE OTHERS CAPTURED ME, TURNED ME INTO SOMETHING...
NOT ALIVE BUT, WELL, ALSO NOT DEAD—YOUR LIFE IS SO CONFUSING, HARDHEAD.
...UH, YEAH, THANKS, WHEELIE.
ANYWAY, PRIME—I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF WALKING INTO JHIAXUS' TRAPS. THIS IS THE THIRD ONE.
IT'S NOT A TRAP IF YOU KNOW YOU'RE WALKING INTO IT.
I TRY TO IMPRESS THAT ON ALL MY FRIENDS.
FRIENDS? YOU USED TO CALL US SOLDIERS.
THOSE DAYS ARE OVER, HARDHEAD. I'M NOT OPTIMUS PRIME ANYMORE—I'M JUST ORION PAX.
I MAY BE A WARRIOR—BUT MINE IS NOT THE PATH ALL CYBERTRONIANS SHOULD FOLLOW.
HAH. YEAH, RIGHT.
THIS PLANET. THIS DEAD WORLD... HOW DID YOU STAND IT, HARDHEAD?
IT WASN'T ALWAYS DEAD.
FIRST TIME I CAME HERE, IT WAS FULL OF PEOPLE. LIKE THOSE LITTLE... WHAT ARE THOSE LITTLE THINGS FROM EARTH CALLED?
EARTHLINGS.
HUMANS, GARNAK.
YEAH, PRETTY CLOSE TO THEM. BUT JHIAXUS EXPERIMENTED—TURNED THEM INTO LITTLE VERSIONS OF US.
AND I HAVEN'T EVEN GOTTEN TO THE CRAZY PART YET.

HARDHEAD LEADS US DEEP UNDERGROUND, TO THE CAVE THAT WAS HIS HOME FOR SEVERAL YEARS.
THIS DEAD WORLD'S ENTRANCE TO... THE DEAD UNIVERSE.
A PARALLEL REALITY, DISCOVERED EONS AGO BY THE ARK-1, WHEN NOVA PRIME AND JHIAXUS LED THEIR EXPEDITION AT THE END OF CYBERTRON'S SO-CALLED GOLDEN AGE.
THEY WERE TRAPPED IN A PLANE UTTERLY DEVOID OF LIFE—THEMSELVES DISTORTED INTO SOMETHING EVIL...
...OR MAYBE THEY WERE ALWAYS EVIL. I SUPPOSE IT'S RELATIVE.
NOVA AND JHIAXUS AND THE OTHERS WERE GONE FOR MILLIONS OF YEARS... UNTIL THEY FOUND A PERMANENT PORTAL BETWEEN UNIVERSES. HERE.
YOU KNOW WHAT THE PEOPLE HERE STARTED CALLING THE PLANET, WHEN JHIAXUS TURNED THEM CYBER-ORGANIC?
NO. AND I DON'T CARE. ALL I CARE ABOUT IS WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM...
...AND HOW I CAN STOP IT FROM HAPPENING TO ANYONE ELSE.
THESE ROCKS, BOSS. SOMETHIN'S WEIRD WITH 'EM.
IT'S LIKE WHAT WE SAW BACK ON ARDURIA AND LV-117. I THINK THESE IS ONE O' SHOCKWAVE'S REGENESIS ORES...
AMAZING. I WAS HERE FOR YEARS AND NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT... OH.
THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE. SOMETHING...

"...BIG."
I CALLED THEM THE CATACOMBS.
THESE STRUCTURES—THEY'RE CYBERTRONIAN. ANCIENT CYBERTRONIAN.
YEAH—THAT'S WHAT MADE THEM SO FASCINATING. JHIAXUS MUST HAVE BUILT THEM TO MAKE THE PLACE FEEL MORE LIKE HOME.
HOME. HOME TO MILLIONS OF PEOPLE... THEN GORLAM PRIME BECAME GROUND ZERO OF AN INVASION MADE POSSIBLE BY NOVA... BY JHIAXUS.
THE REST OF US—WE SAVED THE UNIVERSE.
BUT WE FAILED GORLAM PRIME.
THIS STYLE PREDATES JHIAXUS.
THESE TOWERS ARE FROM THE AGE OF PRIMUS. THE AGE OF THE TITANS.
I HAVE SOME... OLD FRIENDS WHO LIVED IN PLACES LIKE THIS.
PRIME'S VOICE RAISED THE TITAN KNOWN AS METROPLEX—WHO JOINED HIS WAR AGAINST THE VILLAINS HE REJECTS.
HUH. YA LEARN SOMETHIN' EVERY DAY.
WHEN I CONFRONTED JHIAXUS ON LV-117—
—BEFORE HE SLIPPED THROUGH MY GRASP—
—HE SAID HE WOULD BRING GORLAM PRIME FROM THE PAST TO THE FUTURE.

DID HE MEAN IT LITERALLY?
HIS SHIP CAN BEND TIME. AND THESE BUILDINGS, OUT OF THEIR OWN TIME...
WHEELIE TRUSTS WHATEVER ORION HAS TO SAY... BUT THIS PLACE IS CREEPY; WHEN CAN WE GO—
—AWAY...
WHEELIE!
YOUR ARM— DISOLVING!
IT HURTS! HARDHEAD, MAKE IT STOP— BEFORE IT SPREADS TO THE TOP!
SORRY, LITTLE BUDDY...
AHHH!
BRAKKA
NOTHING LIKE THIS EVER HAPPENED BEFORE.
WHEELIE, ARE YOU OKAY?
B-BEEN BETTER, BUT AT LEAST NOT DISINTEGRATED. WHEELIE'S GOTTEN USED TO THE LIFE HE'S BEEN FATED.
BOSS... THERE'S MORE—

"—PROXIMITY ALERT FROM THE ARK-27."
ZZOMEBODY—
—ZZOMEBODY—
—ZZAVE WASPINATOR!
THERE ISN'T ANYONE TO PROTECT YOU, TRAITOR—
—NO ONE ESCAPES US!
CHAGGK
AIGGK!
UNNF—
—GET—GET OFF OF WASPINATOR, YOU MONZZTER—!
KRUMPP
THOOM
YOU'RE WORSE THAN A MONSTER...

...BUT THE GREEN FELLOW IS CORRECT.
STAND DOWN, WILDFLY.
YOU—SAY THAT TO US?
YOU KNOW WHAT WE ARE!
I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU ARE.
OPTIMUZZ PRIME—I—PLEAZZE—
—HELP.
WE'LL HELP ANYONE IN NEED—DECEPTICON OR NOT.
THAT'S WHY WE'RE THE GOOD GUYS. GET BEHIND ME—THINGS ARE ABOUT TO GET A LOT WORSE.
PRIME—WHEELIE DOESN'T MEAN TO WHINE, BUT THOSE SIX VILLAINS STARTED TO COMBINE!
YOU KNOW US—
—YOU FEAR US—
—YOU FEAR—

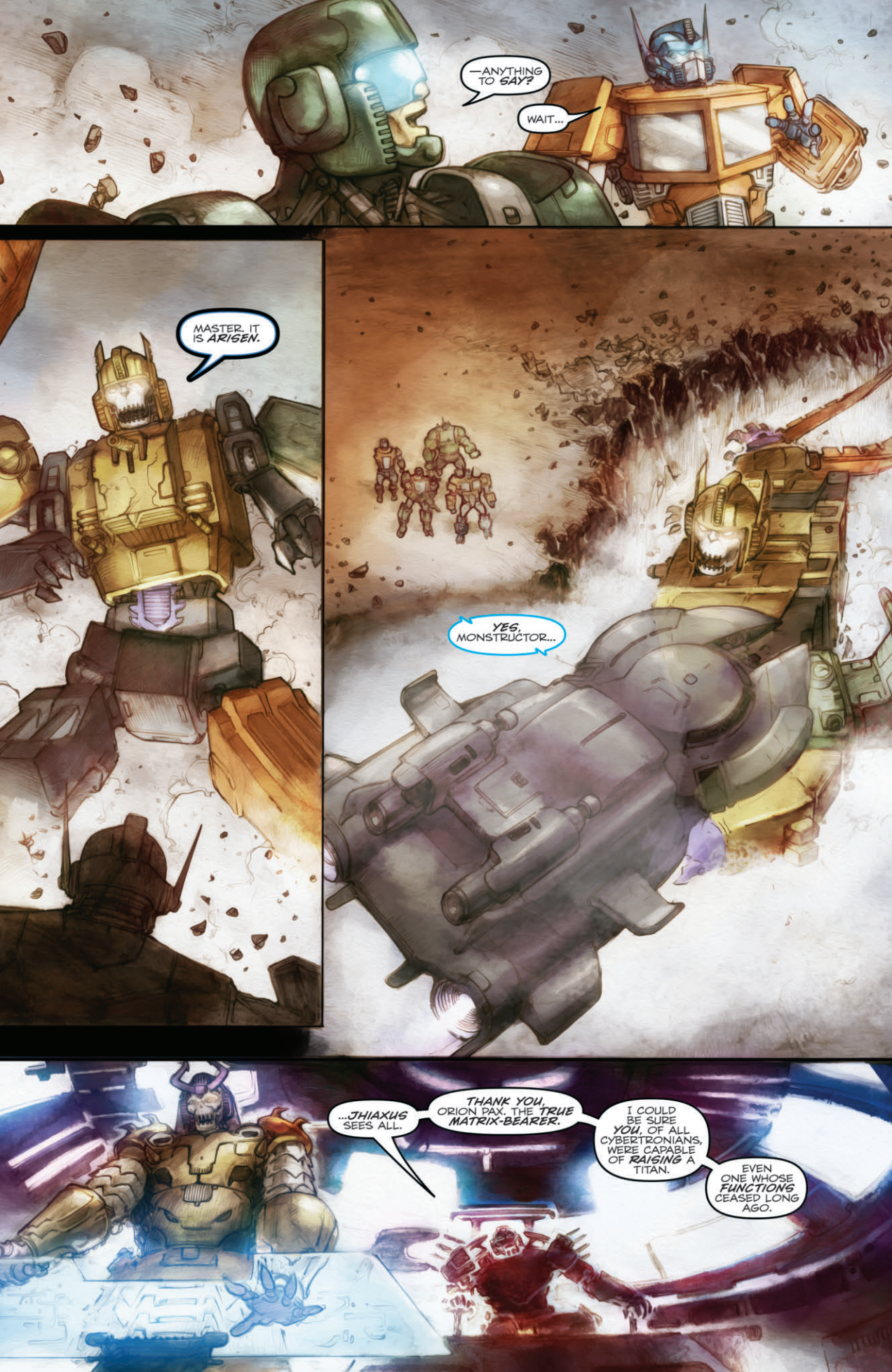
—MONSTRUCTOR!
I AM GETTING REALLY REALLY SICK OF FIGHTING THIS GUY!
WASPINATOR THANKZZ YOU... WASPINATOR WOULD NEVER BE ABLE TO EZZCAPE WITHOUT YOU—
YEAH, I KNOW—AND I'M NOT SAYING I'M GIVING UP...
BRAKKA BRAKKA

RRRRAAHGH!
PINC
PINC
PINC
...I'M SAYING HE'S NOT!
RUUGHHGAAH
KRA-CRUNCHK
THOOFFF
SO MUCH FOR THE ARK-27... AND OUR RIDE HOME. HEY, PRIME—
—REMEMBER WHAT I SAID ABOUT WALKING INTO A TRAP?
HARDHEAD, HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU—
—CALL ME ORION PAX!
THOOM THOOM
I DON'T CARE IF HE SAYS HE'S NOT—
FWOOT-KWA-CHOOM
—ONLY OPTIMUS PRIME WOULD EVER BE THAT STUPIDLY HEROIC.

T-THERE'ZZ SOMETHING YOU SHOULD KNOW.
THEY—THEZZE MONSTERZZ—THEY KIDNAPPED WASPINATOR!
BROUGHT WASPINATOR HERE TO DO SOMETHING TERRIFYING.
YEAH, I CAN SEE TERRIFYING AND IT'S BEARING DOWN ON US!
NNNGG NGG GGNN NNGGN GNNNG GNNGG GGNN NGGG GGNGGG GGGGNG!
UH, OKAY, YEH.
I COULD HEAR IT IN MY HEAD—YOU SEE, WHAT IT WAS I SAID—
FWIP
WOOMP
THERE'ZZ NO TIME FOR THIZZ!
DON'T WORRY, MY DECEPTICON FRIEND. I HAVE A PLAN.
THOOM THOOM
NO—THERE'ZZ SOMETHING UNDERNEATH US.
THAT'ZZ WHAT THEY'RE AFTER.
THE ANCIENT CITY?
IT—OH!
WASPINATOR SEEZZ. IT'ZZ IN CITY MODE. YOU—YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IZZ!
PRIME, WHAT'S HE TALKING ABOUT?
BRAKKA BRAKKA

OF COURSE.
ANYWAYS, PRIME, THAT PLAN OF YOURS—YOU BETTER DO WHATEVER IT IS—
—MONSTRUCTOR IS RIGHT ON US!
THE LUCK. THE LUCK THAT YOU WOULD BE HERE.
OPTIMUZZ PRIME.
THE TRUE MATRIX-BEARER. YOU CAN FEEL IT, CAN'T YOU?
YOU KNOW ITZZ THERE.
YES. OF COURSE.
ARISE.
RRRMMMMBL
...WAIT—YOU CALLED ME "THE TRUE MATRIX-BEARER"?
UH-OH. GOTTA GO!
STAY CALM, WHEELIE. THIS WILL BE...
R-R-RUM-M-B-L-L-L-L-L-L-L-L-L-L
OH—NOW WHEELIE CAN CLEARLY SEE. GUESS THE BAD GUYS HAD BETTER FLEE.

WELL, MONSTRUCTOR—


—ANYTHING TO SAY?
WAIT...
MASTER. IT IS ARISEN.
YES, MONSTRUCTOR...
...JHIAXUS SEES ALL.
THANK YOU, ORION PAX. THE TRUE MATRIX-BEARER.
I COULD BE SURE YOU, OF ALL CYBERTRONIANS, WERE CAPABLE OF RAISING A TITAN.
EVEN ONE WHOSE FUNCTIONS CEASED LONG AGO.

THE CITY DISINTEGRATES, OPTIMUS PRIME.
THIS PLANET'S EQUILIBRIUM IS WRECKED.
THE ORE MY STUDENT, SHOCKWAVE, PLANTED SO LONG AGO—THE ONE THAT PROVIDED AN OPENING INTO THE DEAD UNIVERSE—
—ORE-2: DEATH, AS I LIKE TO CALL IT—
—NOW IT SPREADS.
YOUR ROLE IS NOT FINISHED, MATRIX-BEARER.
YOU WILL BE DRAGGED TO THE FUTURE WITH GORLAM PRIME.
YOU WILL STAY HERE, ORION PAX, WHILE WASPINATOR PILOTS THE TITAN BACK TO CYBERTRON.
YES, MASTER.

AND WE SHALL FOLLOW, AS QUICKLY AS WE CAN.
GOODBYE, ORION PAX.
GOODBYE, OPTIMUS PRIME.
WASPINATOR OBEYS.
JHIAXUS, YOU VILE...
OH, ONE MORE THING—
—PAX CYBERTRONIA.
THE ARROGANCE.
THAT GETS TO ME. THE ARROGANCE OF IDEOLOGUES LIKE JHIAXUS.

THEY THINK THE UNIVERSE BOWS TO THEIR WILL.
WELL.
JHIAXUS HAS ANOTHER THINK COMING.
BOSS, WE'RE ABOUT TO GET DISINTEGRATED. YOU GOT A DENUVIAN GERI-RABBIT TO PULL OUT OF YOUR SERVO-HELMET?
I DUNNO. YOU GUYS SAY STUFF LIKE THAT.
WHAT?
NO LAUGHING MATTER—GORLAM PRIME TURNS TO RUST! IF THERE IS ANY WAY TO ESCAPE—WELL, WE MUST!
HA.
JHIAXUS PLAYED RIGHT INTO MY HAND.
NO WAY. YOU KNEW ABOUT THE TITAN?
OF COURSE NOT, BUT I KNEW JHIAXUS WANTED ME HERE.
YEAH! AND HE GOT WHAT HE WANTED!
MAYBE. BUT NOW WE KNOW EXACTLY WHERE HE'S GOING AND WHO HE'S WORKING WITH.

AND THE, UH, THE SPREADIN' DEATH THAT'S GONNA, UH, DEATH US TA DEATH IN A MINUTE, BOSS?
DID NONE OF YOU QUESTION WHERE I WAS WHEN YOU WERE WANDERING AROUND?
WE'VE BEEN PIGGYBACKING MY SHIP ON THE ARK-27 FOR MONTHS.
I WAS HIDING THE SKYROLLER—
—UNDER A GHOST SHIELD.
WE KNOW JHIAXUS IS GOING TO CYBERTRON TO JOIN FORCES WITH SHOCKWAVE.
AND WE KNOW HE HAS A TITAN, AND WASPINATOR, WHO CAN PILOT ITS SPACE BRIDGE.
WE KNOW ALL THAT, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY— JHIAXUS BELIEVES HE'S FINISHED US OFF.
HARDHEAD, WHEELIE, GARNAK—IT'S TIME TO GO HOME.

THERE'S A UNIVERSE THAT NEEDS *SAVING*...
...AND WE *WON'T* LET THIS HAPPEN TO *ANOTHER WORLD*.

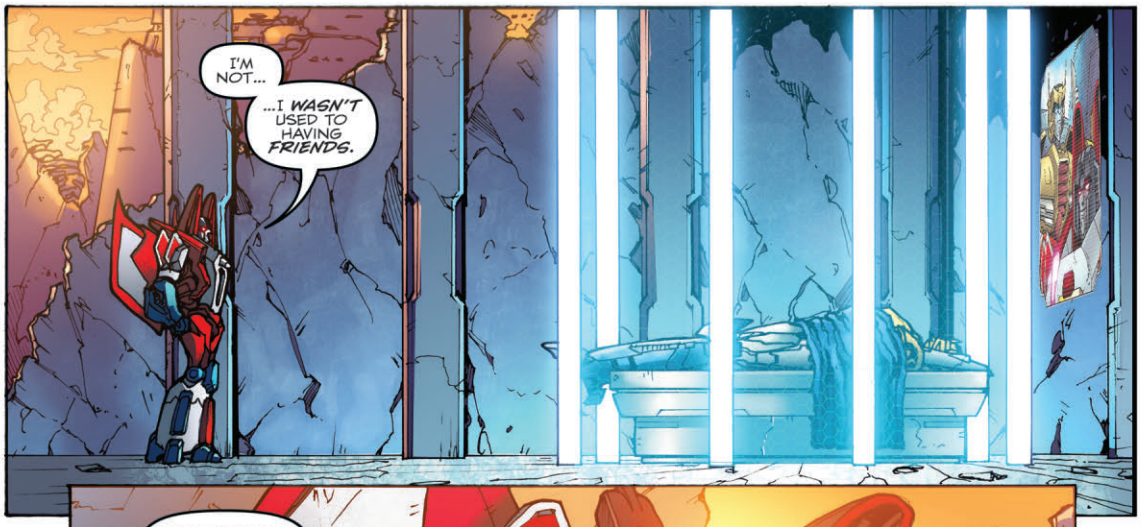
☐ ROBOTS IN DISGUISE #19 COVER B

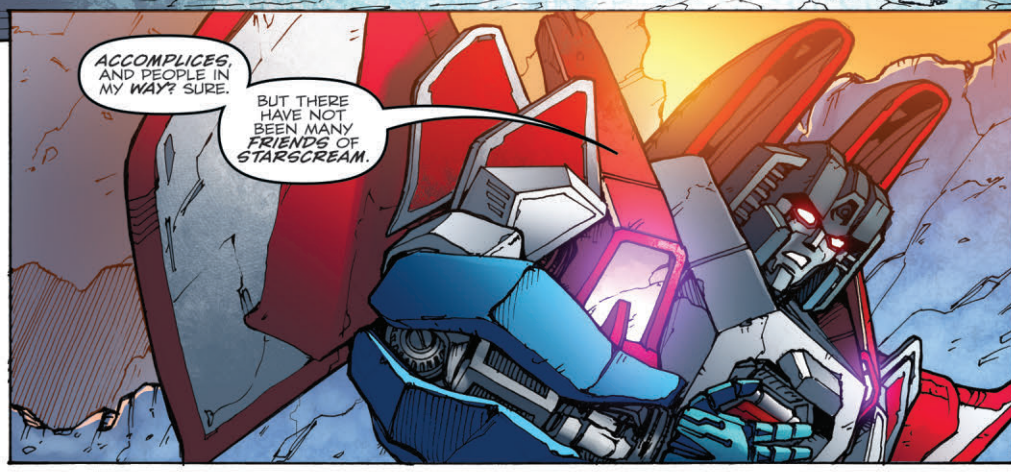
by **CASEY W. COLLER** Colors by **JOANA LAFUENTE**

ROBOTS IN DISGUISE #20 COVER A

by **ANDREW GRIFFITH** COLORS BY **JOSH PEREZ**

YOU WERE MY FRIEND, AND I APPRECIATE WHAT YOU DID FOR ME.
YOU GOT ME WHAT I ALWAYS WANTED, METALHAWK.
YOU GOT ME CYBERTRON.
WHEN THE TITAN SAID I WAS THE CHOSEN ONE—THE TRUE RULER OF CYBERTRON...
...YOU WERE THE ONE WHO TOLD ME WHAT IT ALL MEANT.
YOU TOLD ME IT WASN'T ABOUT SERVING MY OWN GOALS. IT WAS ABOUT SERVING OUR WORLD—AND YOU WERE RIGHT.
SO, WELL...
...I'M SORRY I KILLED YOU, BUDDY.
THREE MONOLOGUES
1- LONG NIGHT

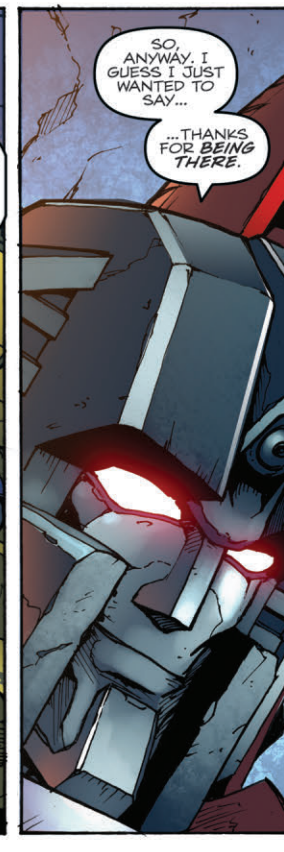

I'M NOT...
...I WASN'T USED TO HAVING FRIENDS.

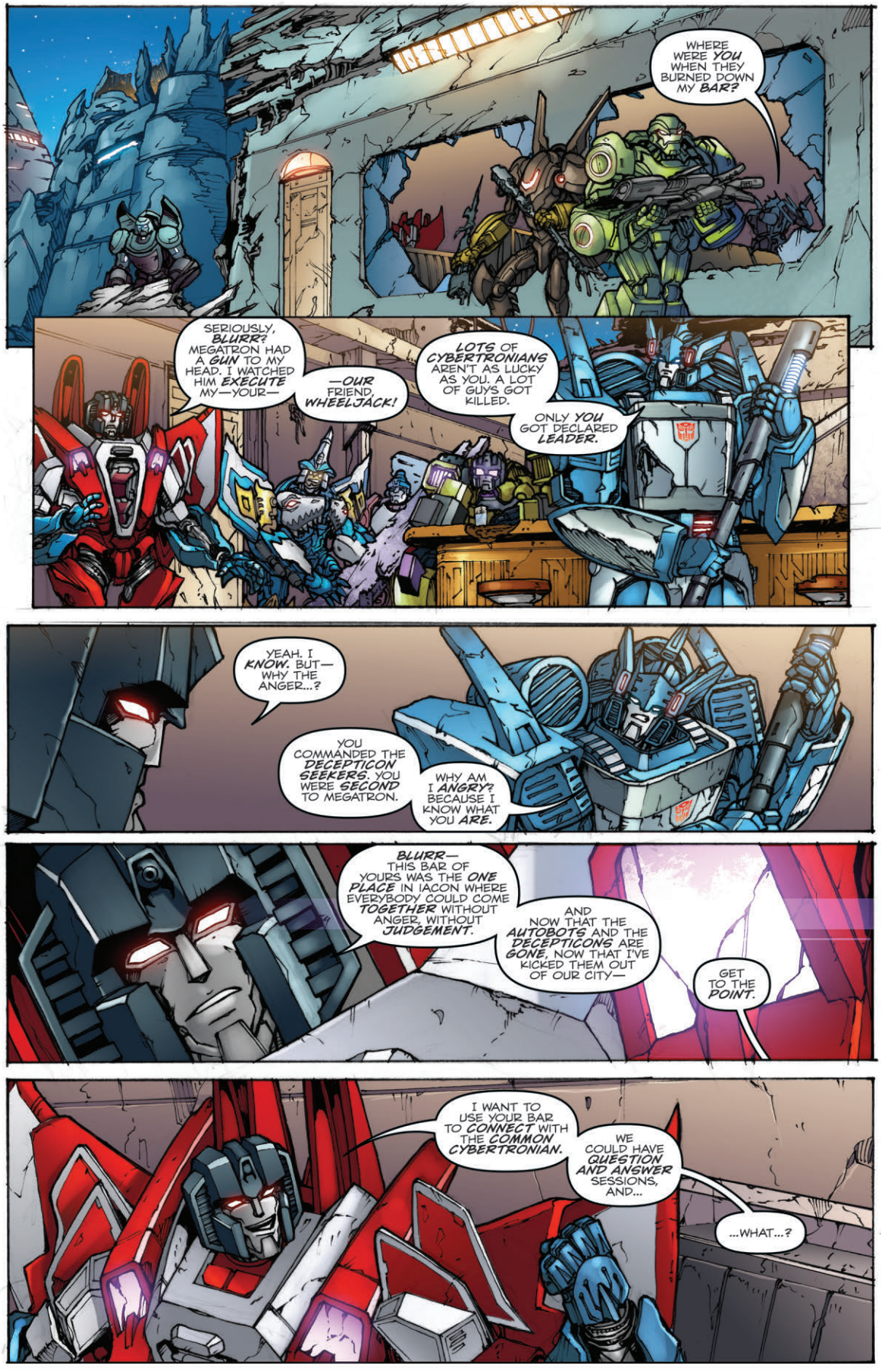

ACCOMPLICES, AND PEOPLE IN MY WAY? SURE.
BUT THERE HAVE NOT BEEN MANY FRIENDS OF STARSCREAM.

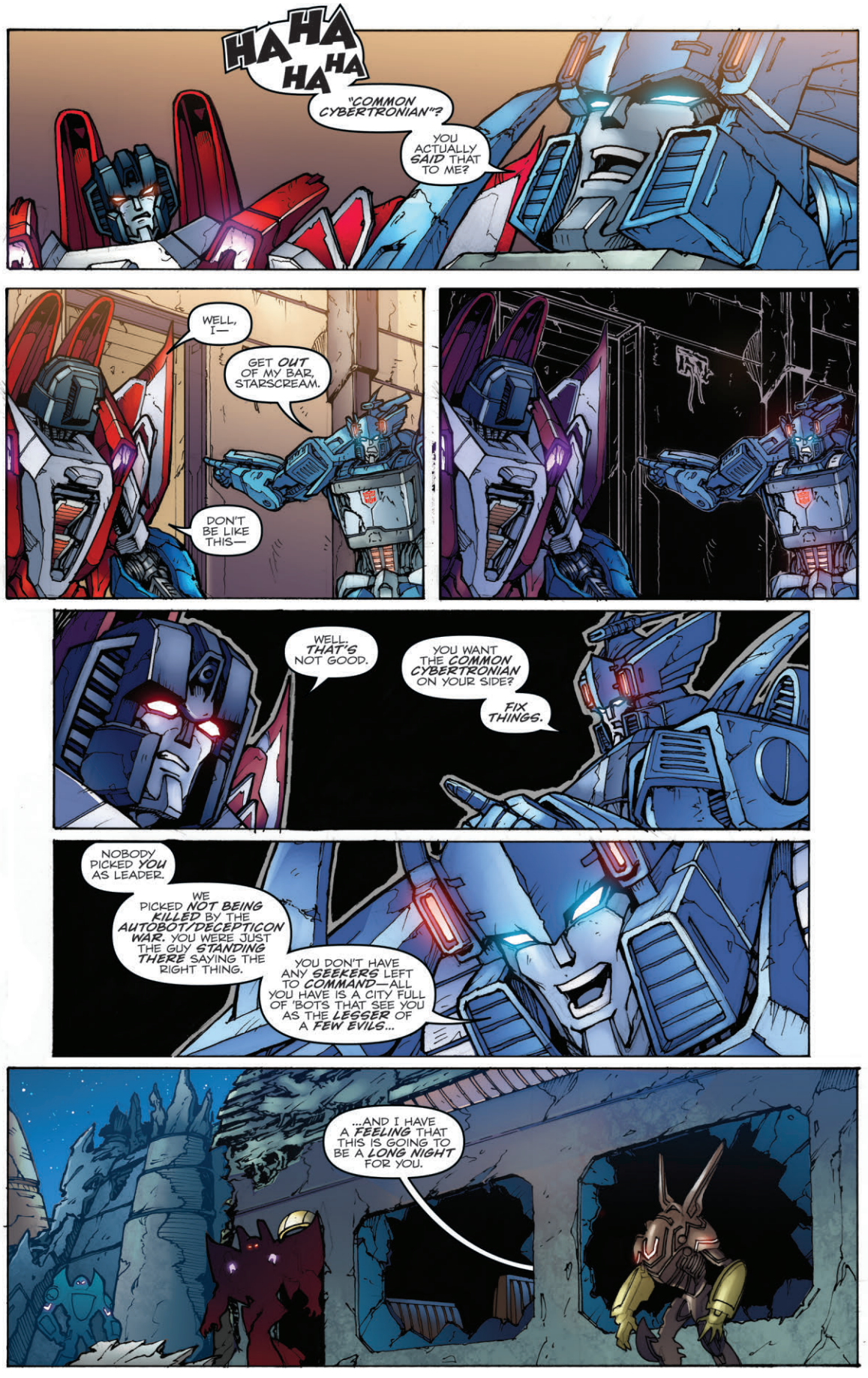
WELL, LOOK.
I WANTED TO SAY THAT, YOU KNOW, I'M SORRY HOW THINGS SHOOK OUT. BUT WHAT YOU DID—
—DYING—
—WAS FOR THE GREATER GOOD. IT'S WHAT YOU WOULD HAVE WANTED.

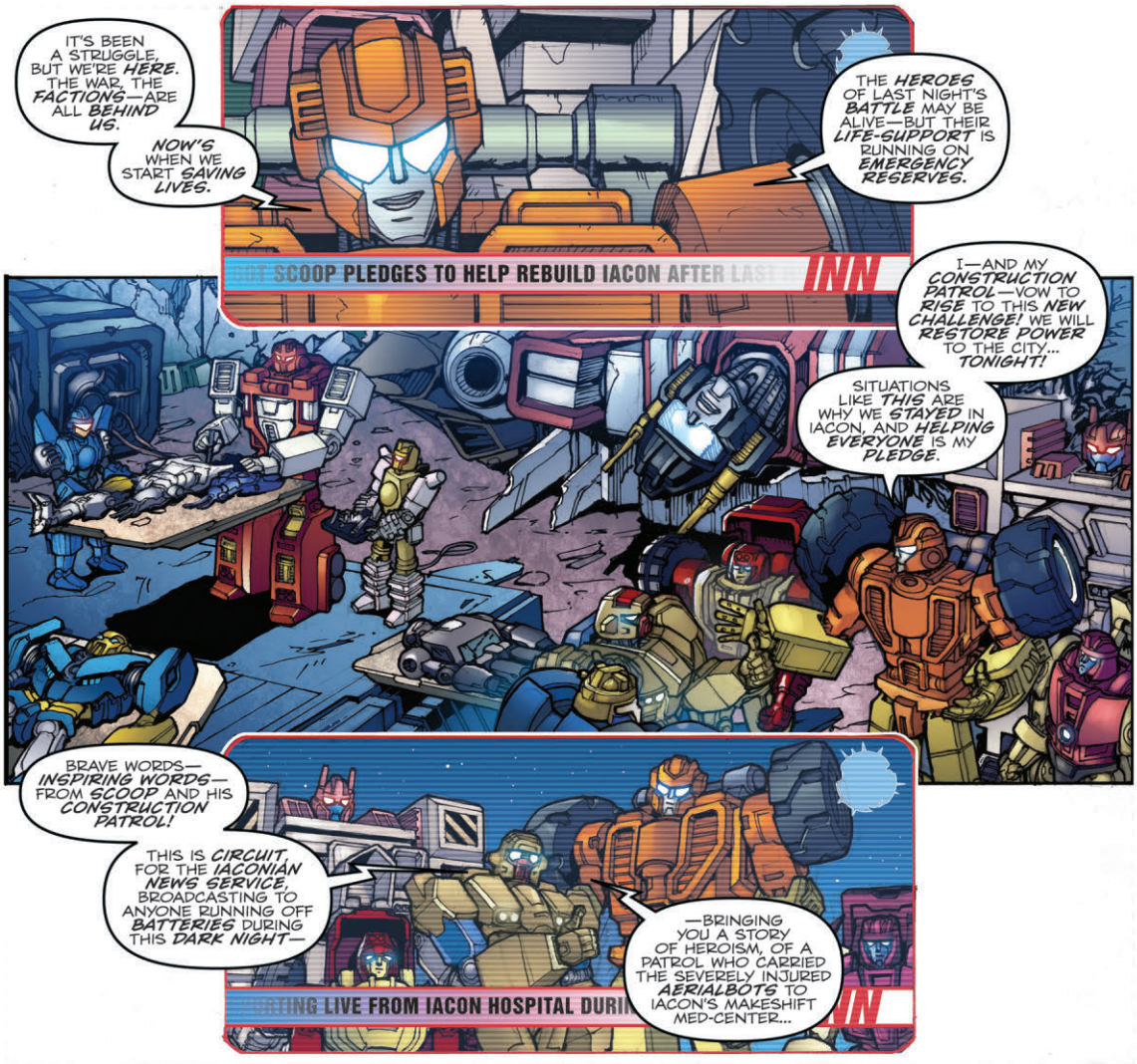
NOW, CYBERTRON IS IN THE HANDS OF SOMEBODY WHO CAN DO SOMETHING. WHO'S WILLING TO DO SOMETHING.
I KNOW YOU WERE FRUSTRATED AT BUMBLEBEE—AT HIS HESITATIONS, AT... WELL, AT HIM.

BUT I GOT TO KNOW YOU, METALHAWK, AND I KNOW YOU WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ANY DIFFERENT.
YOU WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MAKE THE HARD CALL. I MEAN—YOU COULDN'T LET ME DIE.


SO, ANYWAY. I GUESS I JUST WANTED TO SAY...
...THANKS FOR BEING THERE.


WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THEY BURNED DOWN MY BAR?
SERIOUSLY, BLURR? MEGATRON HAD A GUN TO MY HEAD. I WATCHED HIM EXECUTE MY—YOUR—
—OUR FRIEND, WHEELJACK!
LOTS OF CYBERTRONIANS AREN'T AS LUCKY AS YOU. A LOT OF GUYS GOT KILLED.
ONLY YOU GOT DECLARED LEADER.
YEAH. I KNOW. BUT— WHY THE ANGER...?
YOU COMMANDED THE DECEPTICON SEEKERS. YOU WERE SECOND TO MEGATRON.
WHY AM I ANGRY? BECAUSE I KNOW WHAT YOU ARE.
BLURR— THIS BAR OF YOURS WAS THE ONE PLACE IN IACON WHERE EVERYBODY COULD COME TOGETHER WITHOUT ANGER, WITHOUT JUDGEMENT.
AND NOW THAT THE AUTOBOTS AND THE DECEPTICONS ARE GONE, NOW THAT I'VE KICKED THEM OUT OF OUR CITY—
GET TO THE POINT.
I WANT TO USE YOUR BAR TO CONNECT WITH THE COMMON CYBERTRONIAN.
WE COULD HAVE QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSIONS, AND...
...WHAT...?


HA HA HA HA
"COMMON CYBERTRONIAN"?
YOU ACTUALLY SAID THAT TO ME?
WELL, I—
GET OUT OF MY BAR, STARSCREAM.
DON'T BE LIKE THIS—
WELL. THAT'S NOT GOOD.
YOU WANT THE COMMON CYBERTRONIAN ON YOUR SIDE?
FIX THINGS.
NOBODY PICKED YOU AS LEADER.
WE PICKED NOT BEING KILLED BY THE AUTOBOT/DECEPTICON WAR. YOU WERE JUST THE GUY STANDING THERE SAYING THE RIGHT THING.
YOU DON'T HAVE ANY SEEKERS LEFT TO COMMAND—ALL YOU HAVE IS A CITY FULL OF 'BOTS THAT SEE YOU AS THE LESSER OF A FEW EVILS...
...AND I HAVE A FEELING THAT THIS IS GOING TO BE A LONG NIGHT FOR YOU.

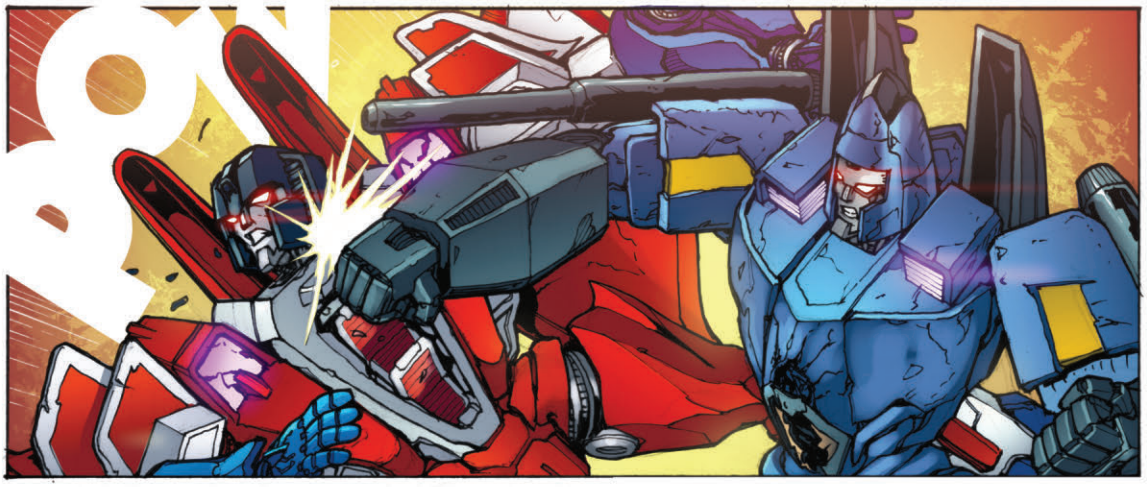

IT'S BEEN A STRUGGLE, BUT WE'RE HERE. THE WAR, THE FACTIONS—ARE ALL BEHIND US.
NOW'S WHEN WE START SAVING LIVES.
THE HEROES OF LAST NIGHT'S BATTLE MAY BE ALIVE—BUT THEIR LIFE-SUPPORT IS RUNNING ON EMERGENCY RESERVES.
SCOOP PLEDGES TO HELP REBUILD IACON AFTER LAS
I—AND MY CONSTRUCTION PATROL—VOW TO RISE TO THIS NEW CHALLENGE! WE WILL RESTORE POWER TO THE CITY... TONIGHT!
SITUATIONS LIKE THIS ARE WHY WE STAYED IN IACON, AND HELPING EVERYONE IS MY PLEDGE.
BRAVE WORDS—INSPIRING WORDS—FROM SCOOP AND HIS CONSTRUCTION PATROL!
THIS IS CIRCUIT, FOR THE IACONIAN NEWS SERVICE, BROADCASTING TO ANYONE RUNNING OFF BATTERIES DURING THIS DARK NIGHT—
—BRINGING YOU A STORY OF HEROISM, OF A PATROL WHO CARRIED THE SEVERELY INJURED AERIALBOTS TO IACON'S MAKESHIFT MED-CENTER...
RTING LIVE FROM IACON HOSPITAL DURI

NOBODY ASKED HIM TO.
WELL, COME ON. THE PEOPLE SEE THE AERIALBOTS AS HEROES.

THEY WERE THE FIRST TO DECRY IACON'S FACTIONALISM, PLUS THEY STOPPED DEVASTATOR AND—
ENOUGH, FLATLINE.

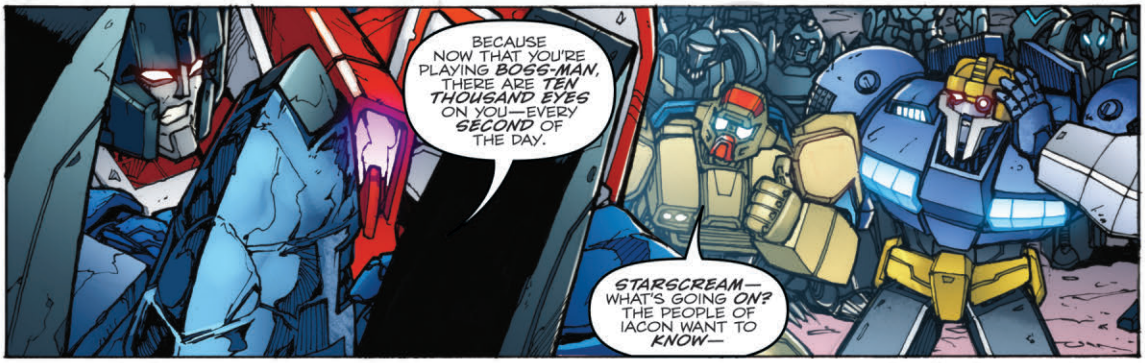
YOUR NEW BODY'S NOT READY YET. COME SUNRISE—
THAT'S NOT WHY I'M HERE. I NEED TO TALK TO THE LAST OF THE SEEKERS...

"...I NEED TO TALK TO DIRGE."
YOU THINK I'D LIFT A FINGER FOR YOU?!
WE SERVED TOGETHER FOR MILLIONS OF YEARS DURING THE WAR. THAT'S GOTTA COUNT FOR SOMETHING.
YOU LEFT ME TO DIE THE SECOND IT WAS CONVENIENT!
MISTAKES WERE MADE.
BUT IT'S NOT ME—IT'S CYBERTRON THAT NEEDS YOUR HELP.
THE POWER'S OUT.
WITH OBSERVATIONS LIKE THAT, HOW DID YOU NEVER TOPPLE MEGATRON?
DIRGE. HAVE YOU LOOKED AROUND? I DID TOPPLE MEGATRON.
I NEED SOMEBODY I CAN TRUST. I MEAN, EVEN IF YOU HATE ME—YOU'RE STILL A SEEKER, RIGHT?
YOU KNOW WHAT?



HUH. I THOUGHT YOU'D AT LEAST GIVE ME A SNAZZY ONE-LINER.
"SEEK THIS" OR SOMETHING.

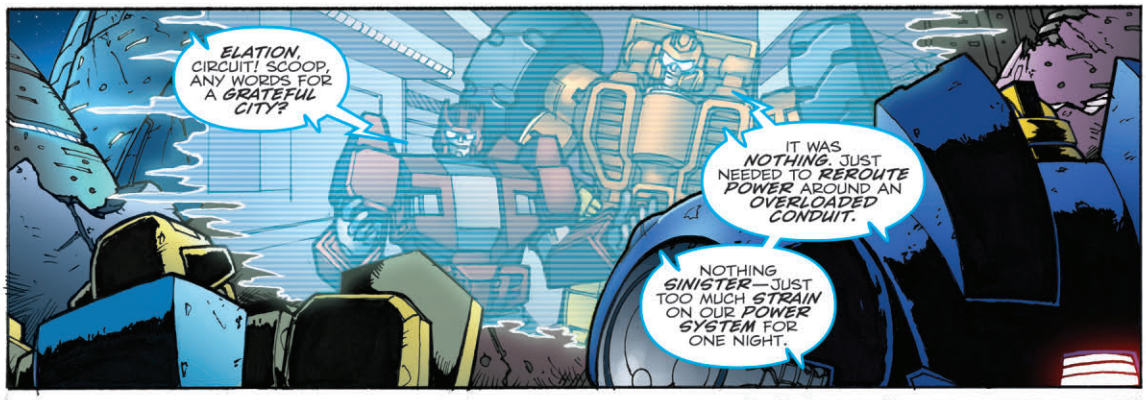
I COULD KILL YOU, DIRGE.
THERE ARE A THOUSAND WAYS I COULD KILL YOU.
NOT ANYMORE, STARSCREAM. HAVE YOU LOOKED OUTSIDE LATELY?


BECAUSE NOW THAT YOU'RE PLAYING BOSS-MAN, THERE ARE TEN THOUSAND EYES ON YOU—EVERY SECOND OF THE DAY.
STARSCREAM—WHAT'S GOING ON? THE PEOPLE OF IACON WANT TO KNOW—

—IS THEIR NEW LEADER ATTACKING WOUNDED CYBERTRONIAN WAR HEROES?
HA. NOT AT ALL.
I JUST WANTED TO MAKE SURE THAT MY OLD FRIEND HERE—AND ALL OF OUR WOUNDED—ARE GETTING THE BEST TREATMENT IACON CAN PROVIDE, EVEN DURING THIS—

—BLACKOUT.
THAT IS SOME TERRIFIC TIMING.
WORD JUST IN—

—POWER HAS BEEN RESTORED THROUGHOUT GREATER IACON, MERE MINUTES AFTER SCOOP AND THE CONSTRUCTION PATROL MADE THEIR VOW!
WE GO LIVE TO CLOUDRAKER AT THE SCENE. CLOUDRAKER, WHAT IS THE FEELING UNDERGROUND?


ELATION, CIRCUIT! SCOOP, ANY WORDS FOR A GRATEFUL CITY?
IT WAS NOTHING. JUST NEEDED TO REROUTE POWER AROUND AN OVERLOADED CONDUIT.
NOTHING SINISTER—JUST TOO MUCH STRAIN ON OUR POWER SYSTEM FOR ONE NIGHT.

YES—SCOOP IS A TRUE PATRIOT, BUT WE MUST REMEMBER—
THE MICROPHONE'S NOT ON, STARSCREAM.
...

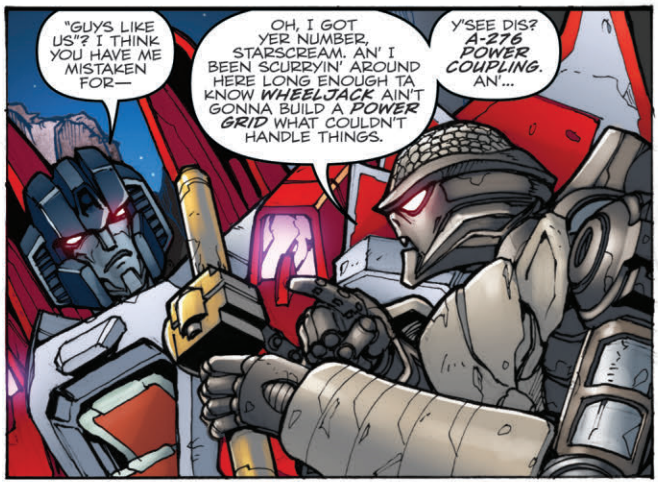
...I SUPPOSE NOT...
PSST. HEY, UH, HEY DERE...

...I WUZ HOPIN' TA FIND YA HERE.
AH. AND YOU LOOK LIKE A Z'VEREIN MOLE-RAT BECAUSE...
...AH... WHAT IS THAT SMELL?

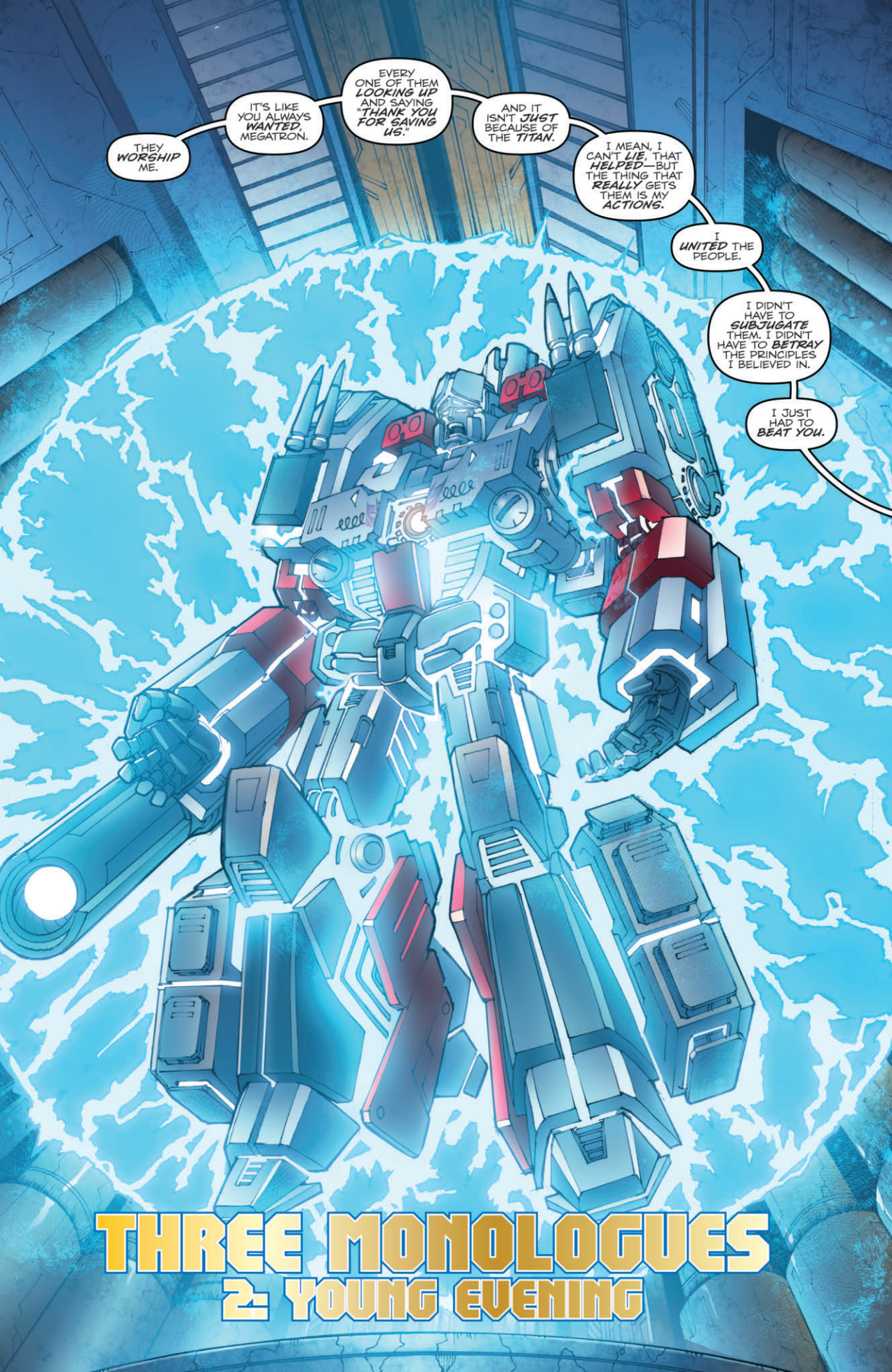
THE NAME'S RATTRAP.
I LOOK LIKE DAT CUZ I SPENT A COUPLE MILLION YEARS FIGHTIN' YOU DECEPTICONS ON Z'VEREI.
AN' WHAT SMELL YOU TALKIN' 'BOUT?

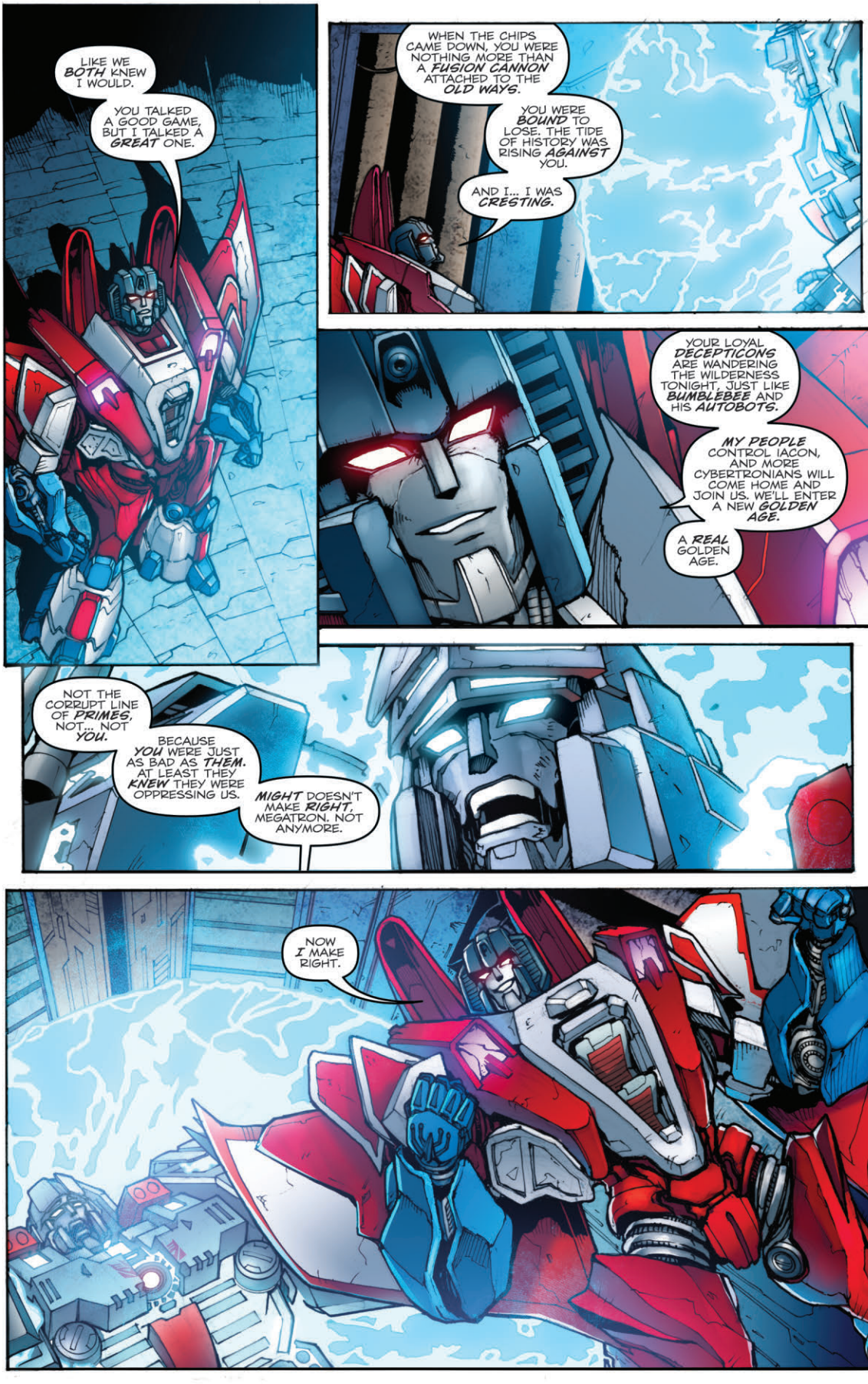
UH.
LOOK. I WANTED TA ASK YA. YOU TRUST DAT GUY?
WHAT? WHO?
SCOOP. CUZ I NEVER DID.

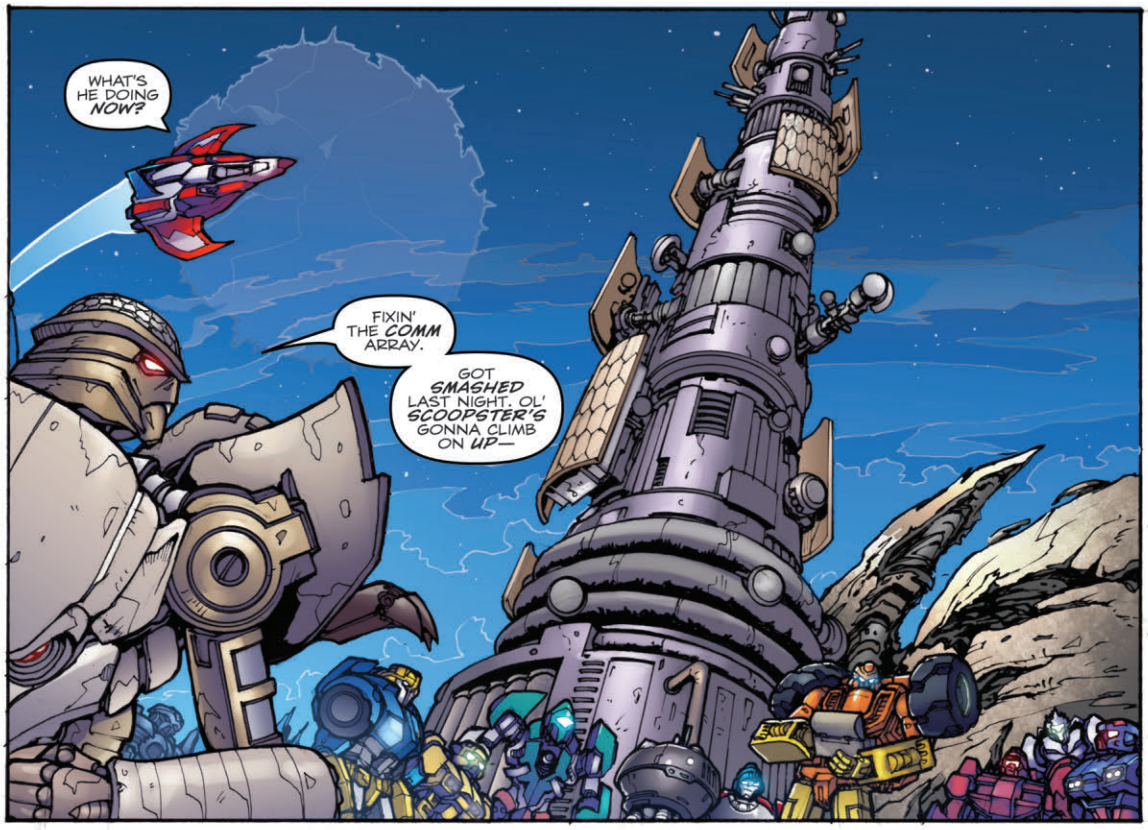
GUY WUZ ALWAYS JEALOUS O' THE 'BOTS WHAT GOT FLASHY JOBS, Y'KNOW?
ALWAYS WANTED MORE.
AND YOU'RE TELLING ME THIS WHY?
MAYBE I SCRATCH YER BACK, YOU SCRATCH MINE. DAT'S HOW THINGS WORK WIT' GUYS LIKE US.


"GUYS LIKE US"? I THINK YOU HAVE ME MISTAKEN FOR—
OH, I GOT YER NUMBER, STARSCREAM. AN' I BEEN SCURRYIN' AROUND HERE LONG ENOUGH TA KNOW WHEELJACK AIN'T GONNA BUILD A POWER GRID WHAT COULDN'T HANDLE THINGS.
Y'SEE DIS? A-276 POWER COUPLING. AN'...

...DAT IS A PHOSPHEX BURN.
WE DIDN'T LOSE POWER CUZ O' AN OVERLOAD. WE LOST IT FROM SABOTAGE.


THEY WORSHIP ME.
IT'S LIKE YOU ALWAYS WANTED, MEGATRON.
EVERY ONE OF THEM LOOKING UP AND SAYING "THANK YOU FOR SAVING US."
AND IT ISN'T JUST BECAUSE OF THE TITAN.
I MEAN, I CAN'T LIE, THAT HELPED—BUT THE THING THAT REALLY GETS THEM IS MY ACTIONS.
I UNITED THE PEOPLE.
I DIDN'T HAVE TO SUBJUGATE THEM. I DIDN'T HAVE TO BETRAY THE PRINCIPLES I BELIEVED IN.
I JUST HAD TO BEAT YOU.
THREE MONOLOGUES
2: YOUNG EVENING


LIKE WE BOTH KNEW I WOULD.
YOU TALKED A GOOD GAME, BUT I TALKED A GREAT ONE.
WHEN THE CHIPS CAME DOWN, YOU WERE NOTHING MORE THAN A FUSION CANNON ATTACHED TO THE OLD WAYS.
YOU WERE BOUND TO LOSE. THE TIDE OF HISTORY WAS RISING AGAINST YOU.
AND I... I WAS CRESTING.
YOUR LOYAL DECEPTICONS ARE WANDERING THE WILDERNESS TONIGHT, JUST LIKE BUMBLEBEE AND HIS AUTOBOTS.
MY PEOPLE CONTROL IACON, AND MORE CYBERTRONIANS WILL COME HOME AND JOIN US. WE'LL ENTER A NEW GOLDEN AGE.
A REAL GOLDEN AGE.
NOT THE CORRUPT LINE OF PRIMES, NOT... NOT YOU.
BECAUSE YOU WERE JUST AS BAD AS THEM. AT LEAST THEY KNEW THEY WERE OPPRESSING US.
MIGHT DOESN'T MAKE RIGHT, MEGATRON. NOT ANYMORE.
NOW I MAKE RIGHT.


WHAT'S HE DOING *NOW?*
FIXIN' THE *COMM* ARRAY.
GOT *SMASHED* LAST NIGHT. OL' *SCOOPSTER'S* GONNA CLIMB ON *UP*—

—AN' GET US TALKIN' TA THE *GALAXY* AGAIN.
ARG. JUST... *ARG.*
DERE. Y'SEE DAT *THING?*

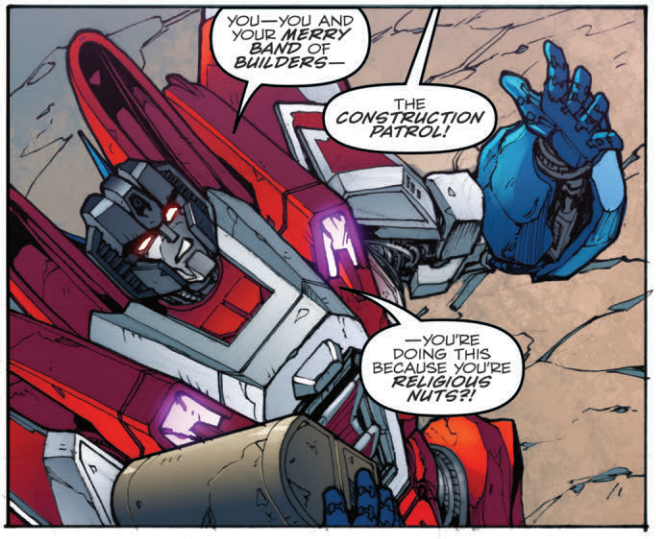
THE *TOOLBOX* O' HIS. SCOOP NEVER GOES *NOWHERE* WIT'OUT IT.

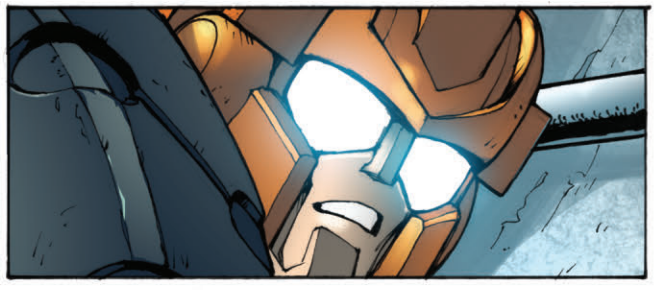
*MM.* AND IT'S NOT LIKE HE'S HAD MUCH TIME TO HIDE ANYTHING ANYWHERE *ELSE...*
YEAH, RIGHT?

SCOOP!
HO THERE, FRIEND!

STARSCREAM!
IT IS AN HONOR TO MEET YOU.
WHAT?
I MEAN... SURE IT IS.
GET UP, SCOOP.
YES, OF COURSE.
I JUST... IF I MAY... I WANTED TO SAY WHAT AN HONOR IT IS TO BE HERE, IN IACON, WITH YOU.
OH, DO GO ON.
I... I ALWAYS BELIEVED IN THE TITANS.
BACK WHEN OPTIMUS PRIME RAISED METROPLEX FROM THE GROUND, I KNEW MY CALLING WAS TO BE AN AUTOBOT.
BUT... WORD CAME THAT METROTITAN HAD REAPPEARED AND SPOKEN TO YOU. HAD DECLARED YOU—
—AND THE AUTOBOTS, MY SO-CALLED BROTHERS—LIKE PROWL—WANTED TO KEEP IT SECRET...
WELL, HE WASN'T REALLY PROWL AT THAT PARTICULAR MOMENT, BUT—
IT DOESN'T MATTER.

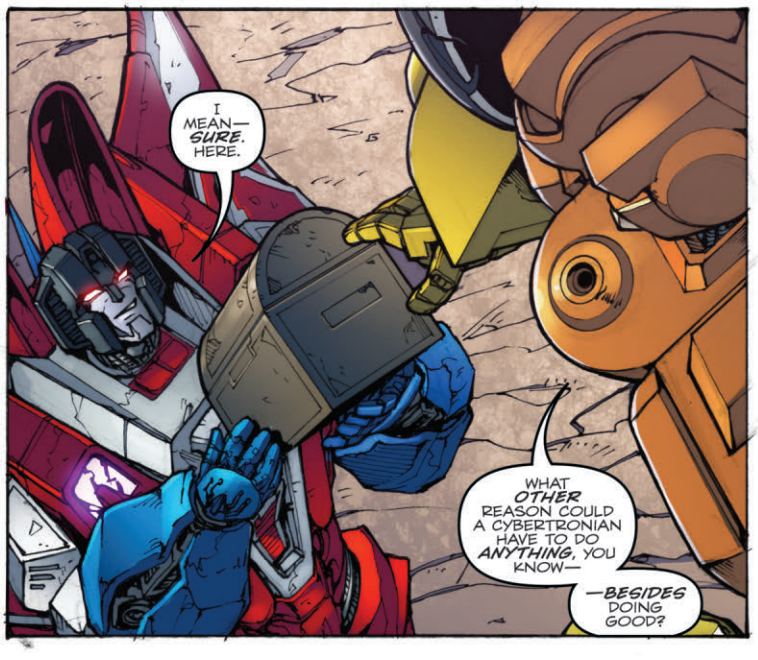
HAVE YOU HEARD THE PROPHECIES THAT SURROUND THE COMING OF THE CHOSEN ONE?
THE... WHAT? HANG ON NOW.


YOU—YOU AND YOUR MERRY BAND OF BUILDERS—
THE CONSTRUCTION PATROL!
—YOU'RE DOING THIS BECAUSE YOU'RE RELIGIOUS NUTS?!



I MEAN—I MEAN—TRUE BELIEVERS.
WHAT THE, ER, THE UNBELIEVING AUTOBOTS WOULD CALL...
I SEE—

—YOU'RE JOKING!
YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE. WE ONLY WANT TO DO GOOD.
HEY, CAN YOU HAND ME MY TOOLBOX?
REALLY?


I MEAN— SURE. HERE.
WHAT OTHER REASON COULD A CYBERTRONIAN HAVE TO DO ANYTHING, YOU KNOW—
—BESIDES DOING GOOD?

HEY BOSS. HOW'D THAT GO?
MM. WHENEVER I THINK I'VE SEEN EVERYTHING...

...HUH. YOU KNOW WHAT? I COULD USE SOME HELP.
WHATCHA GOT IN MIND? AN', UH, NOT TA PUT TOO FINE A POINT ON IT, BUT—
—WHAT'S IN IT FER ME?
THAT, RATTRAP... IS A VERY GOOD QUESTION.

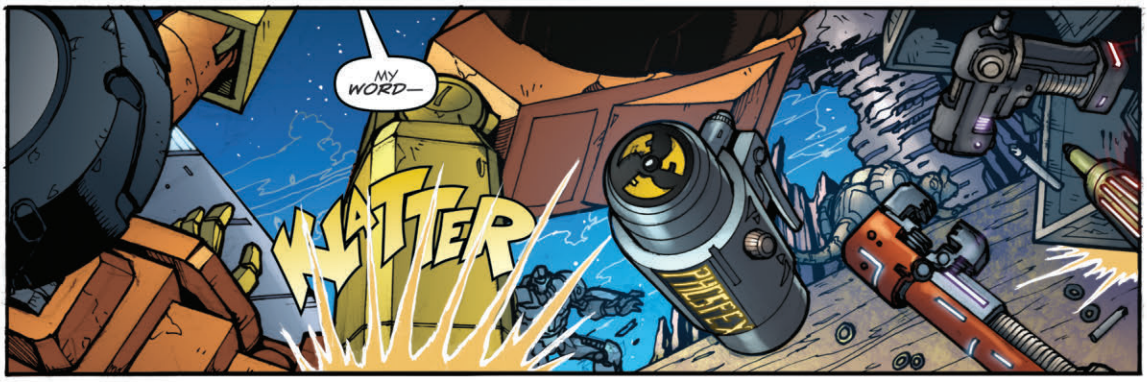
IF SCOOP REALLY DID SABOTAGE THE POWER COUPLING— THE PEOPLE NEED TO KNOW!
SOMETIMES OUR ACTIONS ARE THEIR OWN REWARD. PLUS...
...ERK—I'LL GET YOU A BATH, FOR ONE THING.
STARSCREAM—

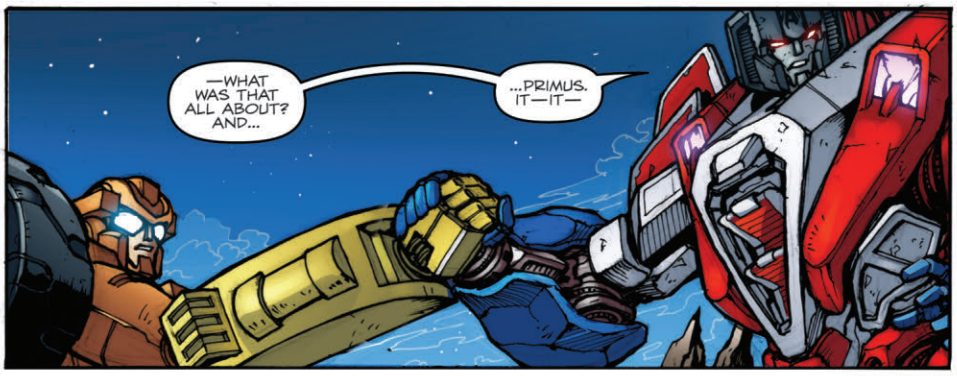
—ANY COMMENT ABOUT SCOOP'S NONSTOP ACTS OF HEROISM? WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING TONIGHT?
YOU CATCH WHAT HE SAID? YOUR MEDIA DARLING SEES ME AS ROLE MODEL.

SCOOP MAY VIEW YOU AS SOME SORT OF RELIGIOUS FIGURE, BUT OTHERS ARE QUESTIONING YOUR ABILITIES.
ARE WE LOOKING AT A CITY DIVIDED, ON THE FIRST DAY OF YOUR REIGN?

WELL, THE EVENING IS STILL YOUNG, CIRCUIT.

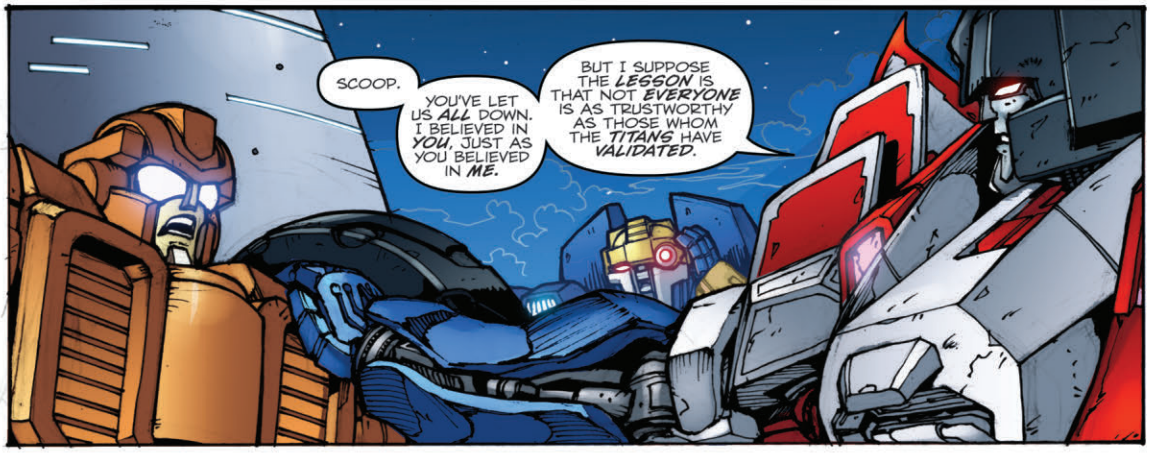
"AND THE CROWD IS THRILLED, AS SCOOP CONTINUES THIS PHENOMENAL NIGHT BY RESTORING COMMUNICATION TO A GALACTIC COMMUNITY—"
—ONE THAT HAS, UNTIL NOW, HAD GOOD REASON TO SHUN US.
YES INDEED, CIRCUIT, TODAY—
WAIT, IT LOOKS LIKE THE HERO OF THE HOUR IS DESCENDING!
WELL, SCOOP—HOW DID IT GO?
IT WENT WELL, MY FRIENDS! COMMUNICATION IS RESTORED!
IF I COULD TAKE THIS CHANCE, TO SAY THAT WE—ALL OF US—
—SHOULD BELIEVE IN OUR LEADERS, AND THANK PRIMUS FOR EVERY CHANCE WE—
—HAVE.
OOPSEY.


MY WORD—
KLATTER
PHOSPHEX


—WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT? AND...
...PRIMUS. IT—IT—

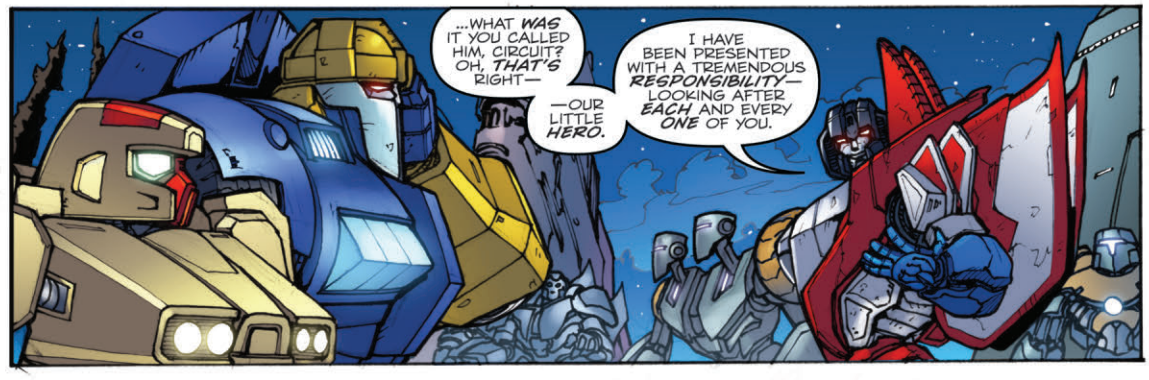
—IT IS PHOSPHEX.
THERE WERE— MY INVESTIGATION INDICATED THERE WERE PHOSPHEX BURNS ON THE POWER COUPLING THAT SCOOP CALLED "DEFECTIVE."

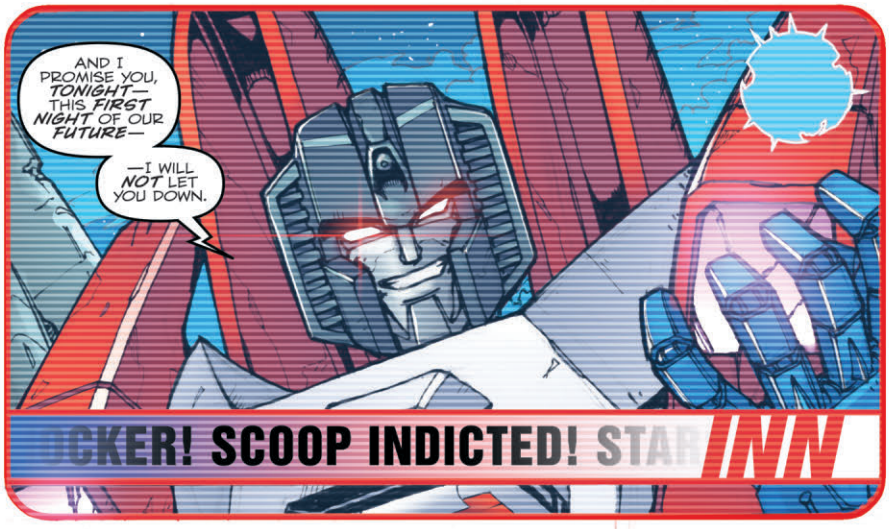
YOU... YOU ORCHESTRATED THE BLACKOUT FOR YOUR OWN BENEFIT?!
I—I DON'T—
HOW—?

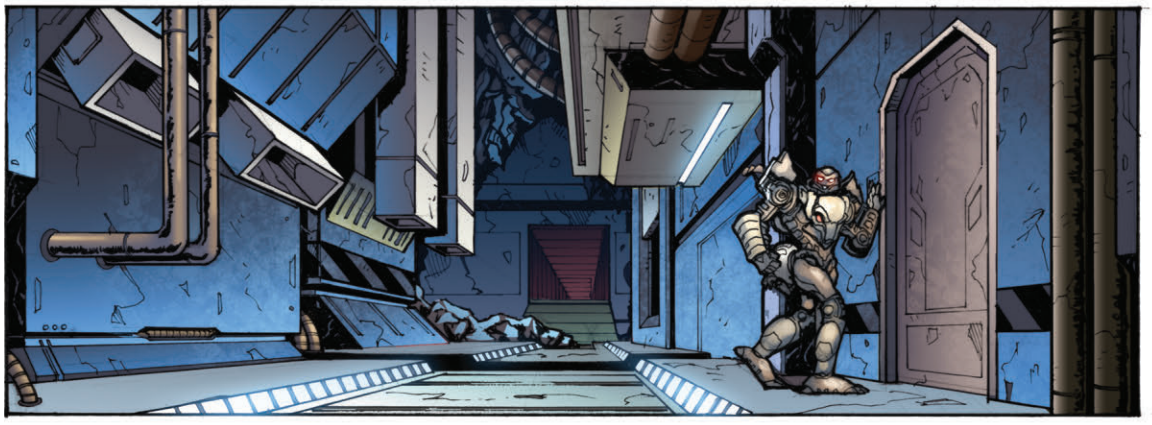

SCOOP.
YOU'VE LET US ALL DOWN. I BELIEVED IN YOU, JUST AS YOU BELIEVED IN ME.
BUT I SUPPOSE THE LESSON IS THAT NOT EVERYONE IS AS TRUSTWORTHY AS THOSE WHOM THE TITANS HAVE VALIDATED.

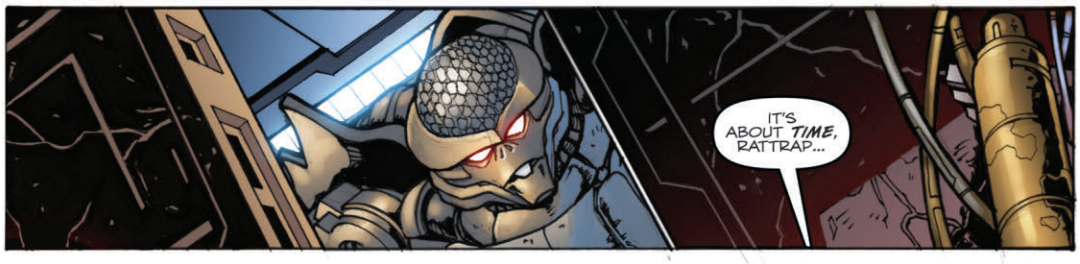
COULD SOMEONE TAKE HIM TO A HOLDING CELL?
IF THE OLD AUTOBOT PRISON ISN'T STILL FUNCTIONING... I'M SURE WE'LL FIND SOMETHING.
I—NO!

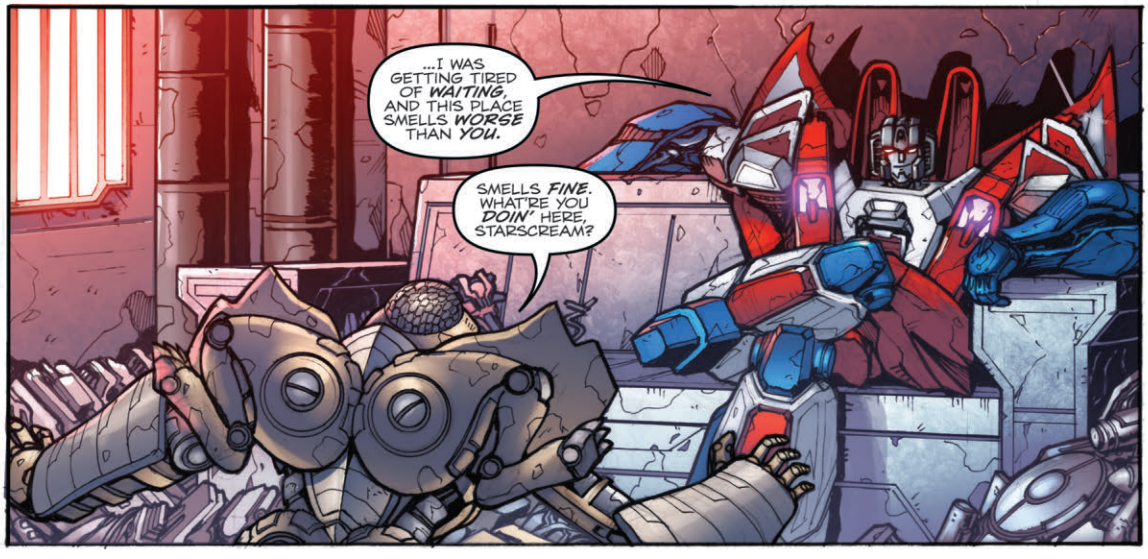
WE'LL HOLD HIM UNTIL WE CAN ORGANIZE A TRIAL. UNTIL THEN, NOT A PAINT FLECK WILL BE HARMED ON OUR LITTLE...
NO! THIS ISN'T HAPPENING!

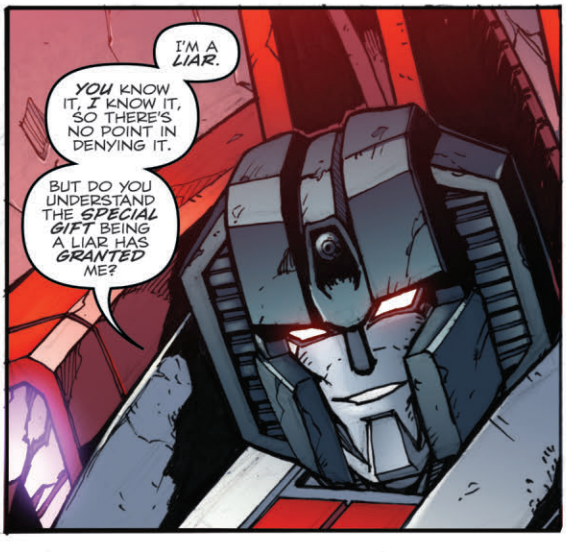

...WHAT WAS IT YOU CALLED HIM, CIRCUIT? OH, THAT'S RIGHT—
—OUR LITTLE HERO.
I HAVE BEEN PRESENTED WITH A TREMENDOUS RESPONSIBILITY— LOOKING AFTER EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU.

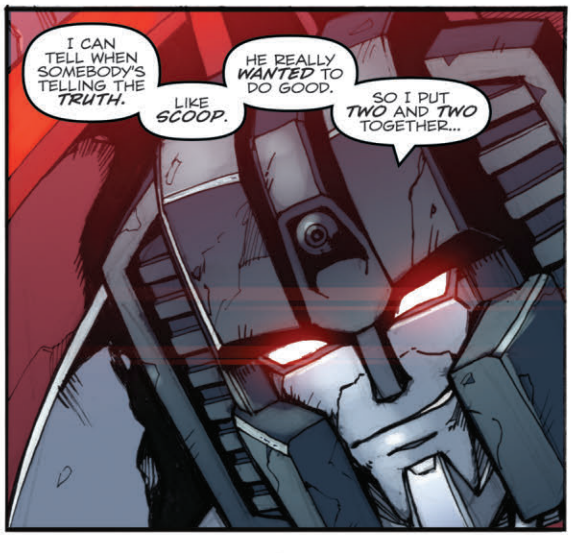

AND I PROMISE YOU, TONIGHT— THIS FIRST NIGHT OF OUR FUTURE—
—I WILL NOT LET YOU DOWN.
CKER! SCOOP INDICTED! STAR
INN

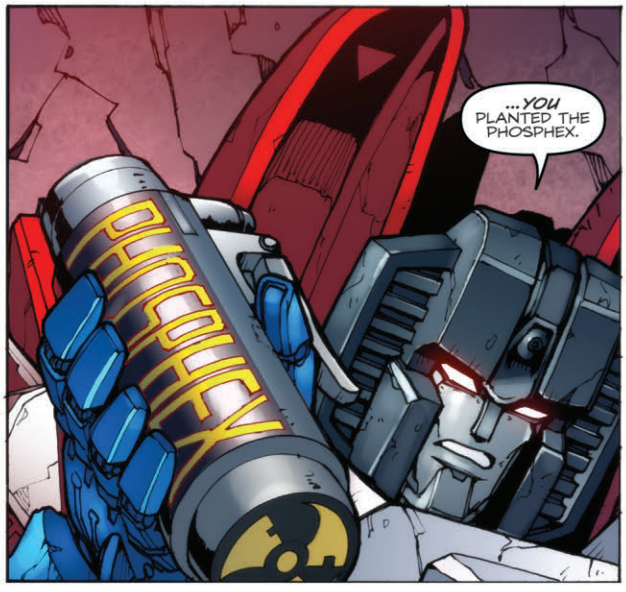



IT'S ABOUT *TIME*, RATTRAP...


...I WAS GETTING TIRED OF *WAITING*, AND THIS PLACE SMELLS *WORSE* THAN *YOU*.
SMELLS *FINE*. WHAT'RE YOU *DOIN'* HERE, STARSCREAM?


I'M A *LIAR*.
*YOU* KNOW IT, *I* KNOW IT, SO THERE'S NO POINT IN DENYING IT.
BUT DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE *SPECIAL GIFT* BEING A LIAR HAS *GRANTED* ME?


I CAN TELL WHEN SOMEBODY'S TELLING THE *TRUTH*.
LIKE *SCOOP*.
HE REALLY *WANTED* TO DO GOOD.
SO I PUT *TWO* AND *TWO* TOGETHER...


...YOU PLANTED THE PHOSPHEX.
PHOSPHEX

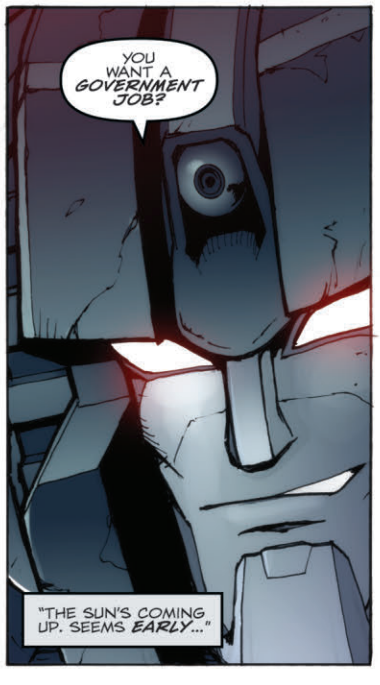
YOU CAN'T—I WUZ—I WUZ JUST—
NO, NO—NO NEED TO EXPLAIN.

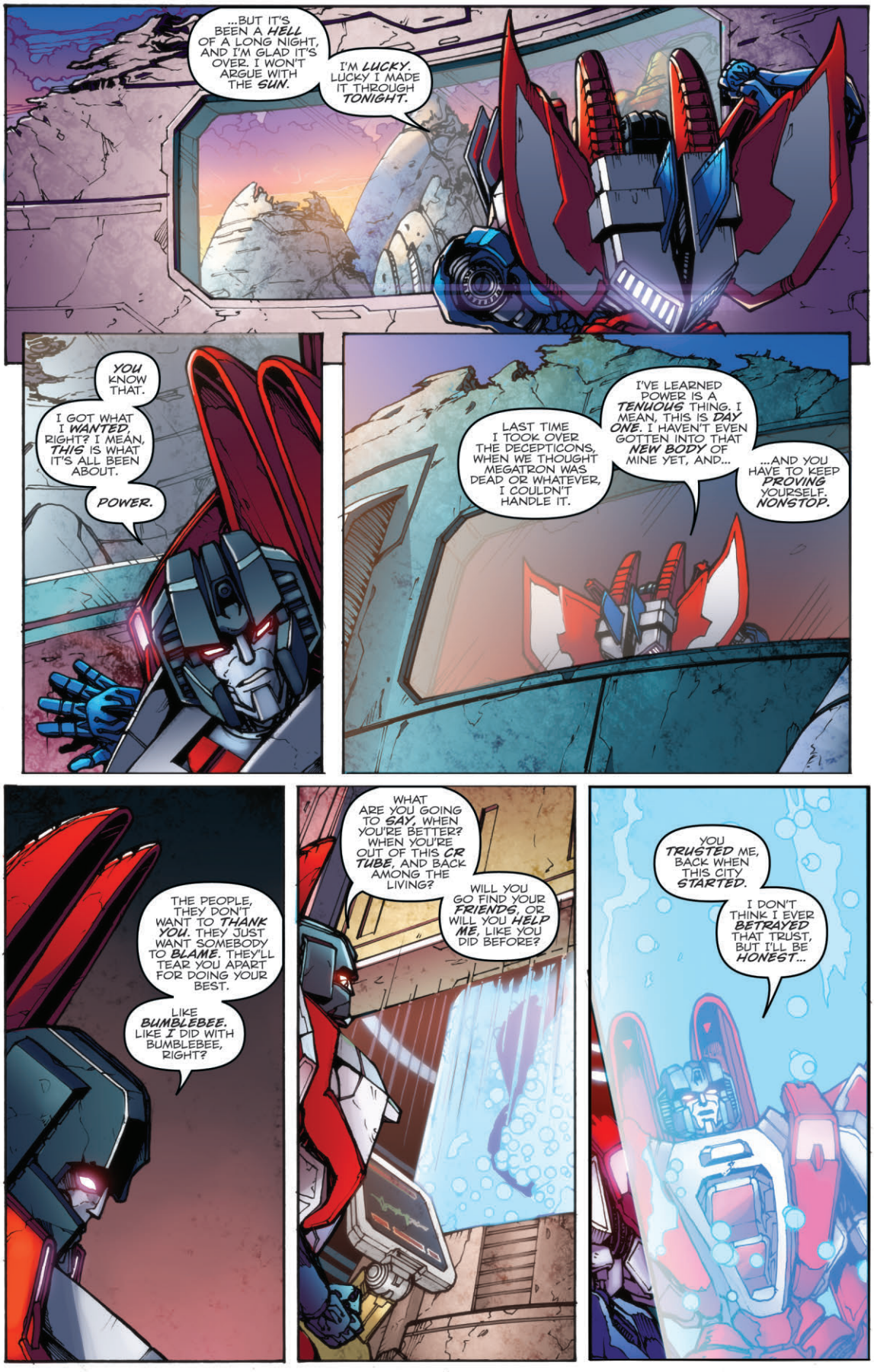
I GET IT. YOU'RE ME.
HUH?

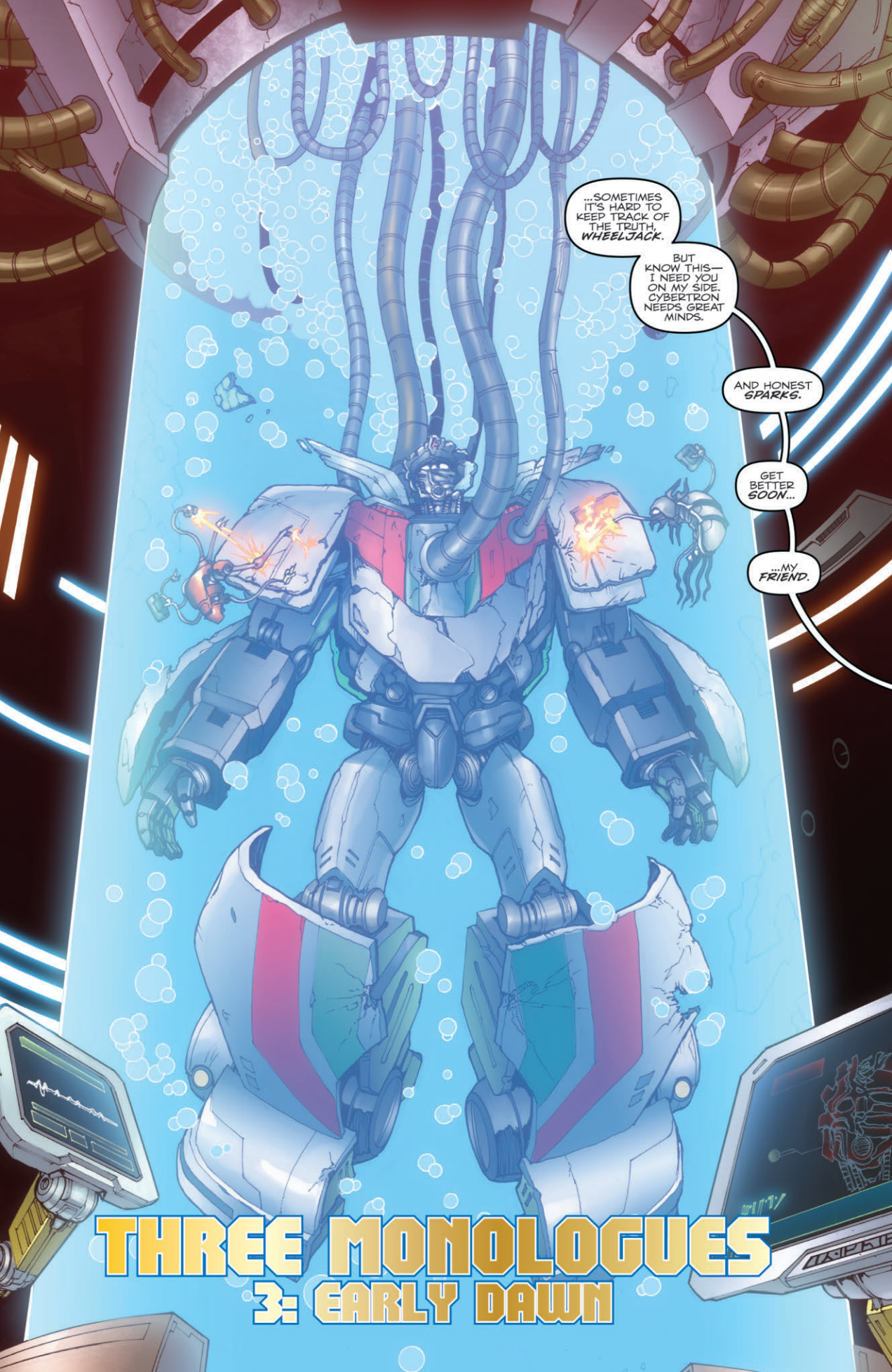
YOU WEREN'T DESCRIBING SCOOP, BEFORE.
YOU WERE THE ONE STUCK ON SOME FORSAKEN BACKWATER PLANET WHILE PROWL AND BUMBLEBEE COZIED UP TO OPTIMUS PRIME.
I GET THAT FEELING. I UNDERSTAND IT, I KNOW HOW IT WORKS.

SCOOP... SCOOP JUST WANTED TO DO WHAT WAS RIGHT.
AND ALTRUISM IS UNPREDICTABLE.

SO, UH, WHAT'S ALL THIS MEAN TA ME?
HA. SEE? I TOLD YOU, THAT IS A GOOD QUESTION.

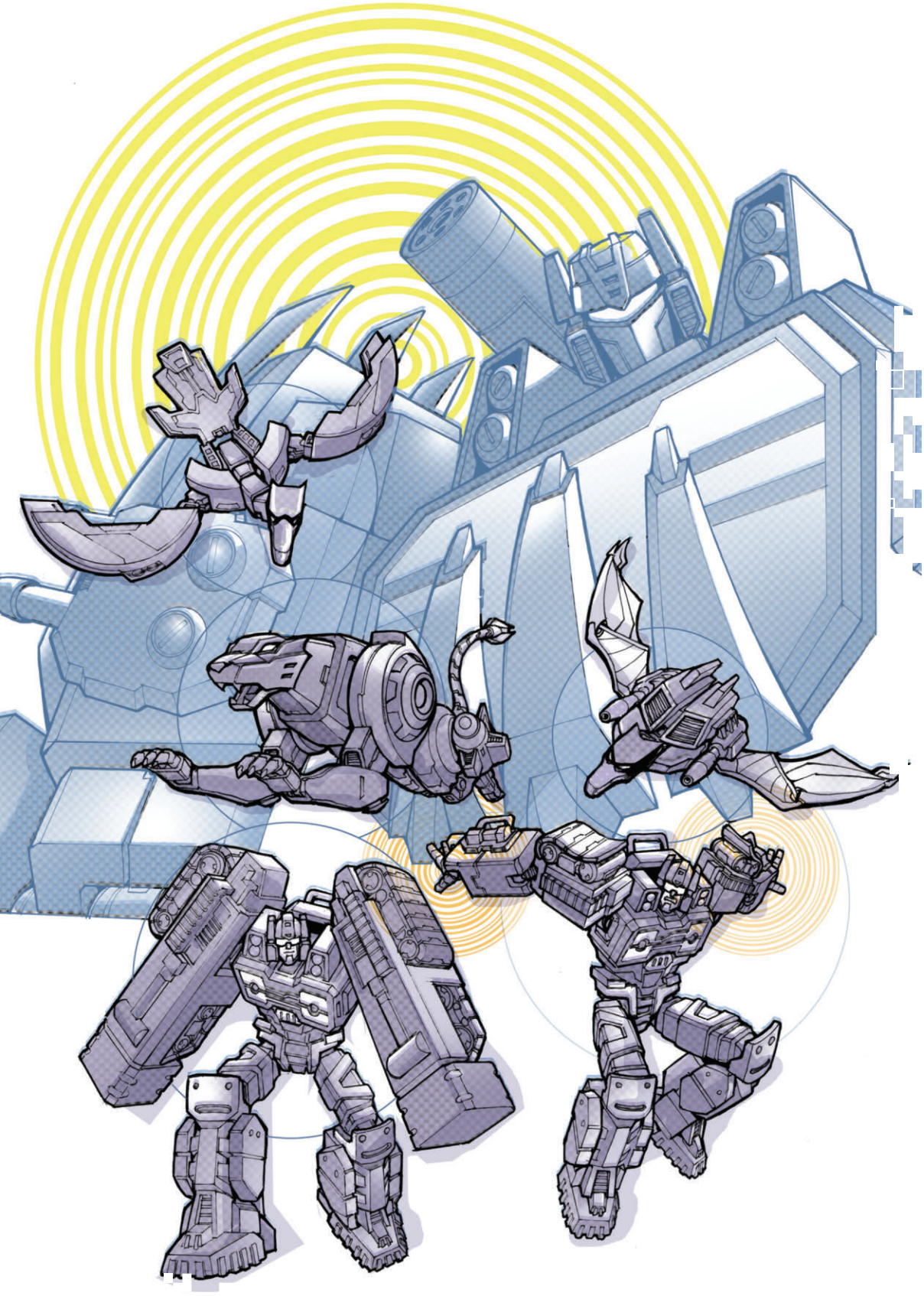

YOU WANT A GOVERNMENT JOB?
"THE SUN'S COMING UP. SEEMS EARLY..."


...BUT IT'S BEEN A HELL OF A LONG NIGHT, AND I'M GLAD IT'S OVER. I WON'T ARGUE WITH THE SUN.
I'M LUCKY. LUCKY I MADE IT THROUGH TONIGHT.
YOU KNOW THAT.
I GOT WHAT I WANTED, RIGHT? I MEAN, THIS IS WHAT IT'S ALL BEEN ABOUT.
POWER.
LAST TIME I TOOK OVER THE DECEPTICONS, WHEN WE THOUGHT MEGATRON WAS DEAD OR WHATEVER, I COULDN'T HANDLE IT.
I'VE LEARNED POWER IS A TENUOUS THING. I MEAN, THIS IS DAY ONE. I HAVEN'T EVEN GOTTEN INTO THAT NEW BODY OF MINE YET, AND...
...AND YOU HAVE TO KEEP PROVING YOURSELF. NONSTOP.
THE PEOPLE, THEY DON'T WANT TO THANK YOU. THEY JUST WANT SOMEBODY TO BLAME. THEY'LL TEAR YOU APART FOR DOING YOUR BEST.
LIKE BUMBLEBEE. LIKE I DID WITH BUMBLEBEE, RIGHT?
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO SAY, WHEN YOU'RE BETTER? WHEN YOU'RE OUT OF THIS CR TUBE, AND BACK AMONG THE LIVING?
WILL YOU GO FIND YOUR FRIENDS, OR WILL YOU HELP ME, LIKE YOU DID BEFORE?
YOU TRUSTED ME, BACK WHEN THIS CITY STARTED.
I DON'T THINK I EVER BETRAYED THAT TRUST, BUT I'LL BE HONEST...


...SOMETIMES IT'S HARD TO KEEP TRACK OF THE TRUTH, WHEELJACK.
BUT KNOW THIS— I NEED YOU ON MY SIDE. CYBERTRON NEEDS GREAT MINDS.
AND HONEST SPARKS.
GET BETTER SOON...
...MY FRIEND.
THREE MONOLOGUES
3: EARLY DAWN

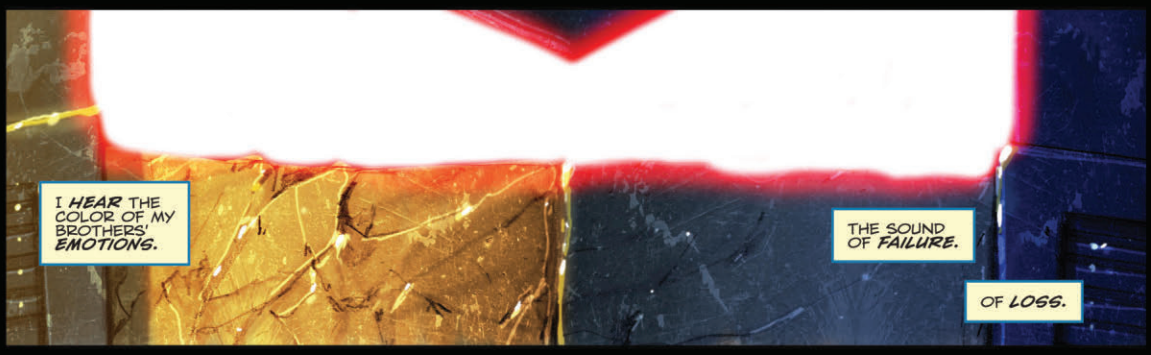
ROBOTS IN DISGUISE #20 COVER RI

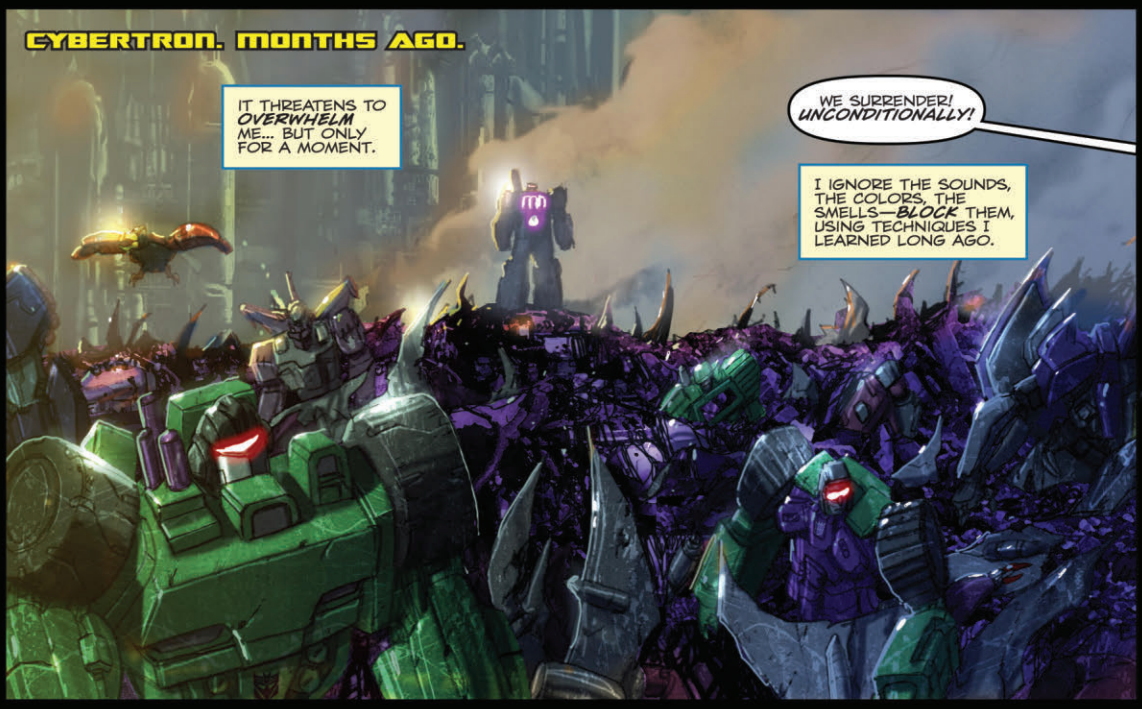
by **LIVIO RAMONDELLI**



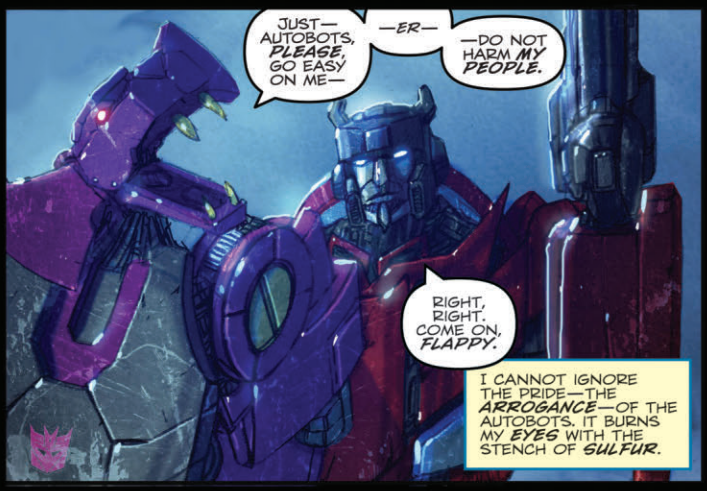
☐ ROBOTS IN DISGUISE #21 COVER A

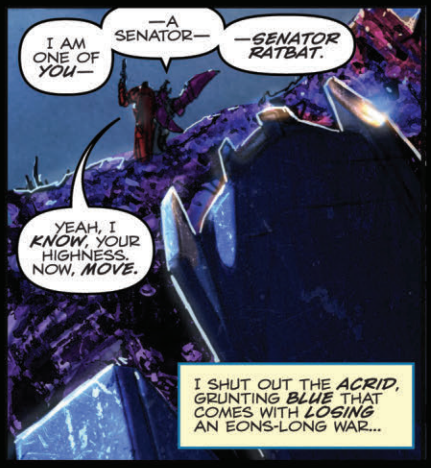
by **ANDREW GRIFFITH**

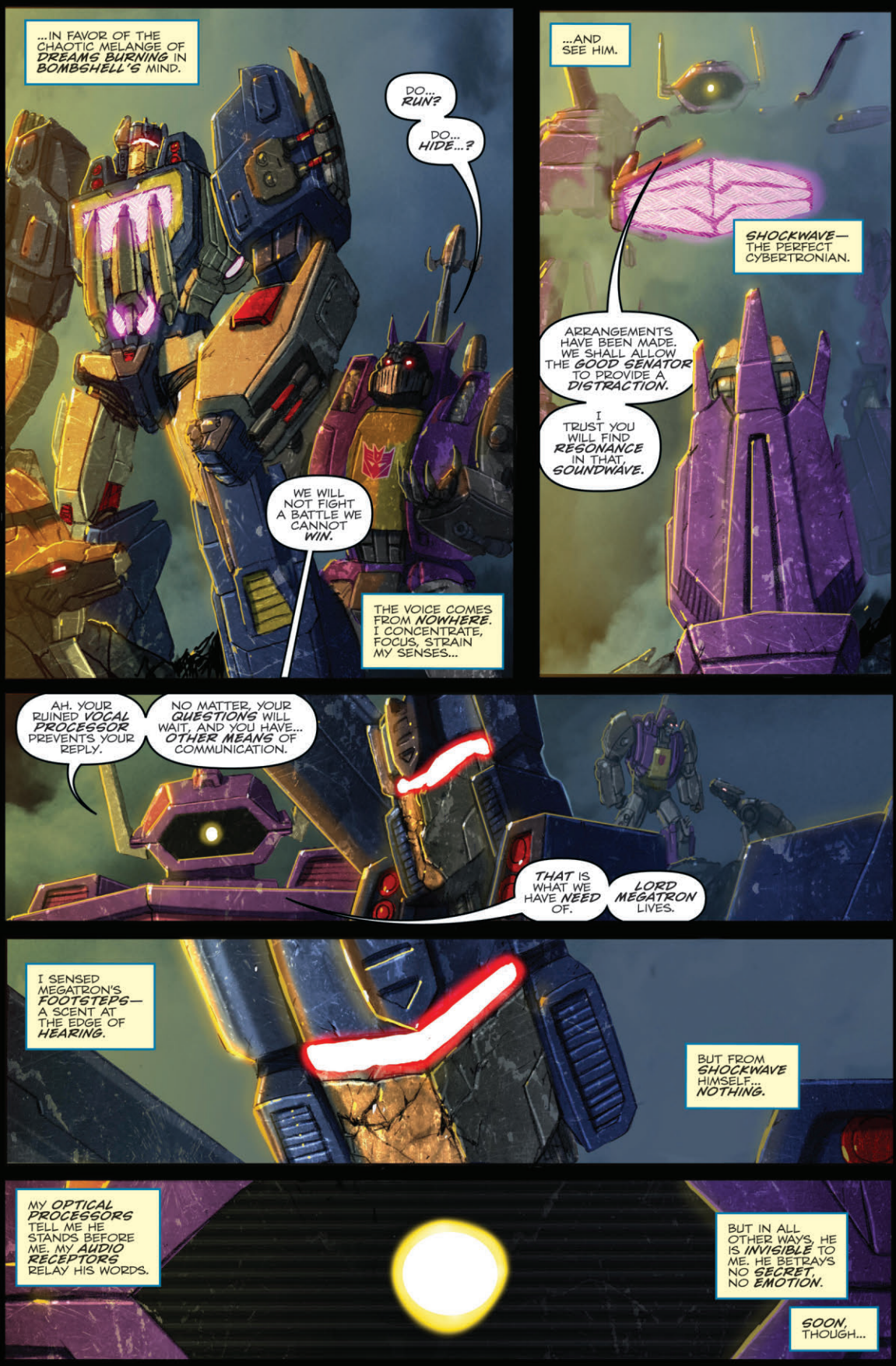

I HEAR THE COLOR OF MY BROTHERS' EMOTIONS.
THE SOUND OF FAILURE.
OF LOSS.


CYBERTRON. MONTHS AGO.
IT THREATENS TO OVERWHELM ME... BUT ONLY FOR A MOMENT.
WE SURRENDER! UNCONDITIONALLY!
I IGNORE THE SOUNDS, THE COLORS, THE SMELLS—BLOCK THEM, USING TECHNIQUES I LEARNED LONG AGO.

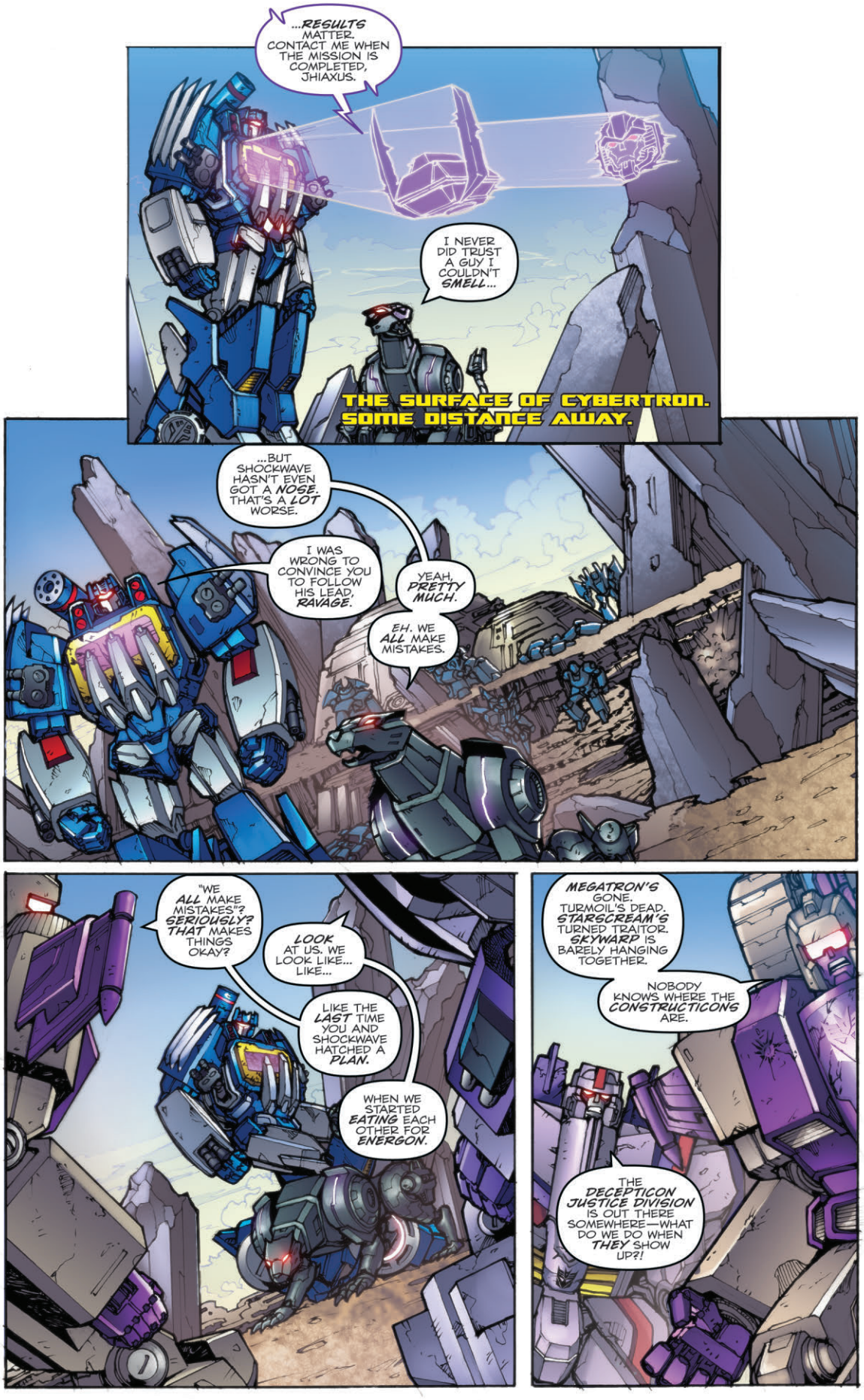
FOCUS ON RATBAT—HIS BLUSTER THE GROWLING FLAVOR OF AN UNSCRATCHABLE ITCH.
ALL DECEPTICON FORCES! AS YOUR RANKING OFFICER, I ORDER YOU—
—LAY DOWN YOUR WEAPONS!

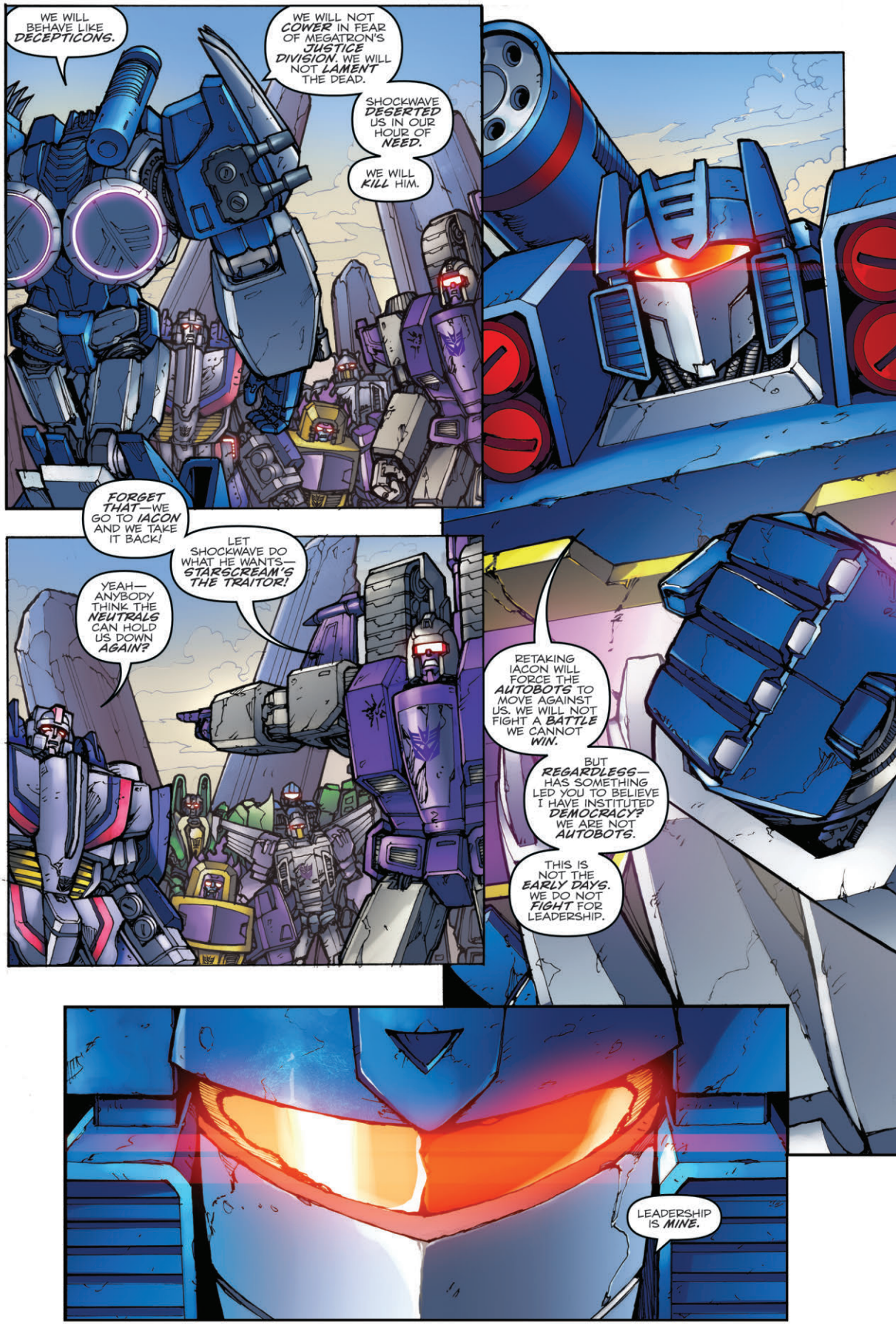

JUST—AUTOBOTS, PLEASE, GO EASY ON ME—
—ER—
—DO NOT HARM MY PEOPLE.
RIGHT, RIGHT. COME ON, FLAPPY.
I CANNOT IGNORE THE PRIDE—THE ARROGANCE—OF THE AUTOBOTS. IT BURNS MY EYES WITH THE STENCH OF SULFUR.


I AM ONE OF YOU—
—A SENATOR—
—SENATOR RATBAT.
YEAH, I KNOW, YOUR HIGHNESS. NOW, MOVE.
I SHUT OUT THE ACRID, GRUNTING BLUE THAT COMES WITH LOSING AN EONS-LONG WAR...

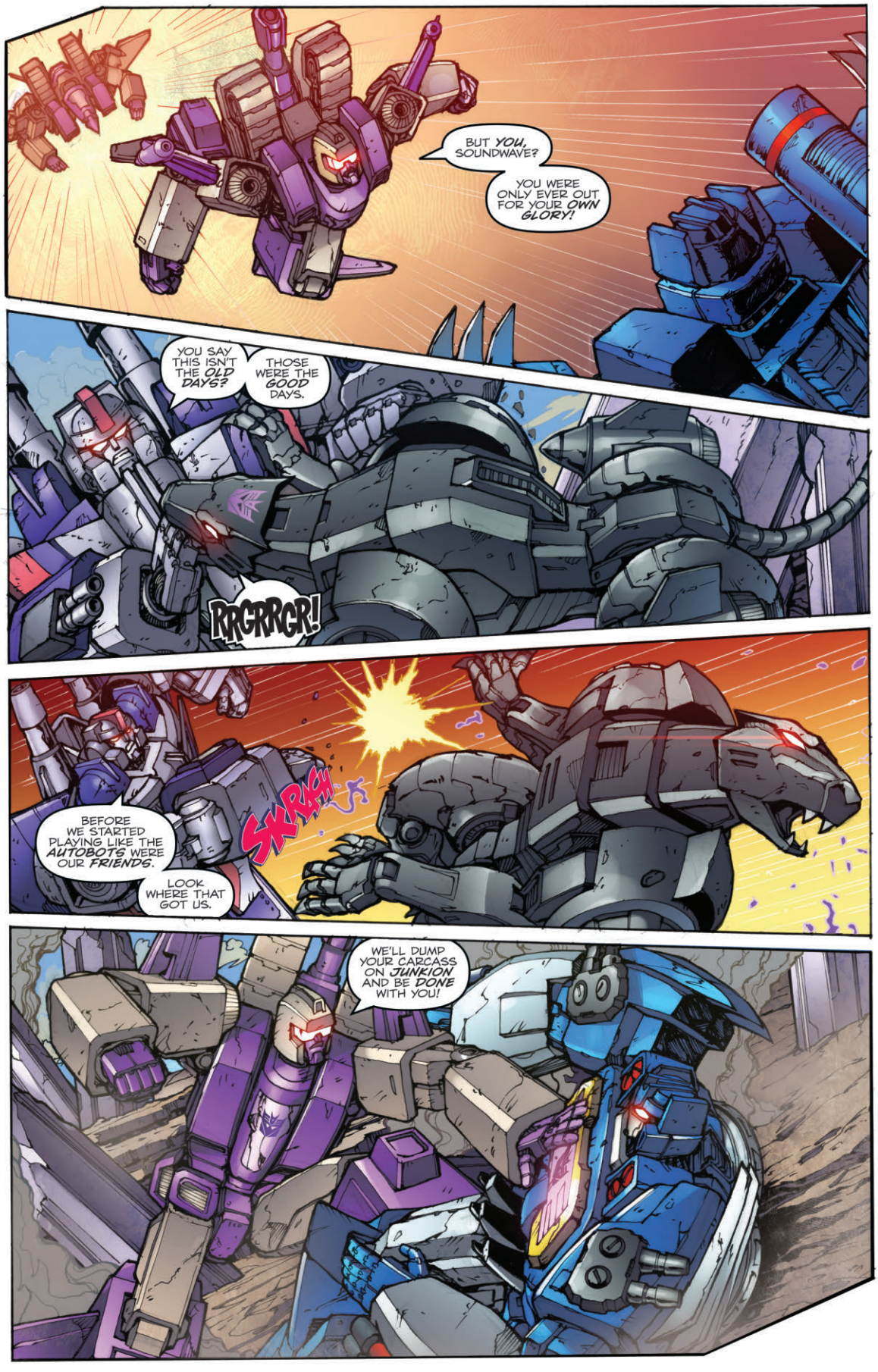

...IN FAVOR OF THE CHAOTIC MELANGE OF DREAMS BURNING IN BOMBSHELL'S MIND.
DO... RUN?
DO... HIDE...?
WE WILL NOT FIGHT A BATTLE WE CANNOT WIN.
THE VOICE COMES FROM NOWHERE. I CONCENTRATE, FOCUS, STRAIN MY SENSES...
...AND SEE HIM.
SHOCKWAVE— THE PERFECT CYBERTRONIAN.
ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE. WE SHALL ALLOW THE GOOD SENATOR TO PROVIDE A DISTRACTION.
I TRUST YOU WILL FIND RESONANCE IN THAT, SOUNDWAVE.
AH. YOUR RUINED VOCAL PROCESSOR PREVENTS YOUR REPLY.
NO MATTER, YOUR QUESTIONS WILL WAIT. AND YOU HAVE... OTHER MEANS OF COMMUNICATION.
THAT IS WHAT WE HAVE NEED OF.
LORD MEGATRON LIVES.
I SENSED MEGATRON'S FOOTSTEPS— A SCENT AT THE EDGE OF HEARING.
BUT FROM SHOCKWAVE HIMSELF... NOTHING.
MY OPTICAL PROCESSORS TELL ME HE STANDS BEFORE ME. MY AUDIO RECEPTORS RELAY HIS WORDS.
BUT IN ALL OTHER WAYS, HE IS INVISIBLE TO ME. HE BETRAYS NO SECRET, NO EMOTION.
SOON, THOUGH...

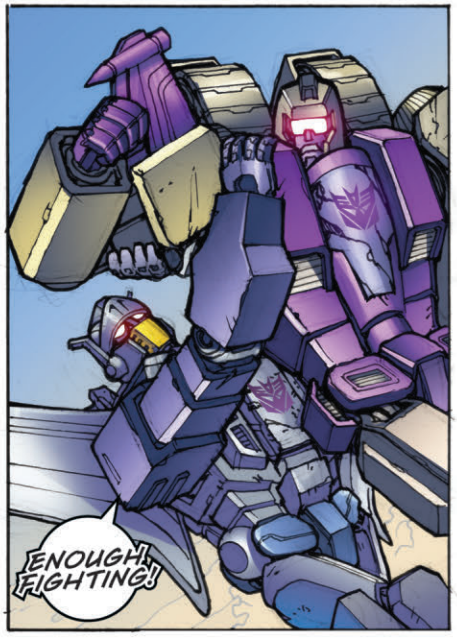
...SHOCKWAVE WOULD BETRAY US ALL.
HUH. NOW THAT, BOSS...
THE CRYSTAL CITY, CYBERTRON. TODAY.
...THAT IS REALLY SOMETHING.
MY WOUND'S JUST— JUST—
—CLOSIN' RIGHT UP!
STILL WISH YOU'DA GIVEN A WARNING BEFORE YOU SHOT ME, BUT, WELL.
IT'S, WHAT—THESE CRYSTALS DOIN' IT?
IT IS AN ORE, DREADWING...
...ORE-14. NOW— SILENCE. I HAVE BUSINESS.
MORE THAN JUST BUSINESS, MY STUDENT.
JHIAXUS. YOUR SITUATION?
I ORBIT GORLAM PRIME. I AWAIT THE ARRIVAL OF ORION PAX.
IT IS... AN ODD FEELING TO RETURN TO THIS WORLD, AFTER THE YEARS I SPENT...
YOUR FEELINGS ARE IMMATERIAL...

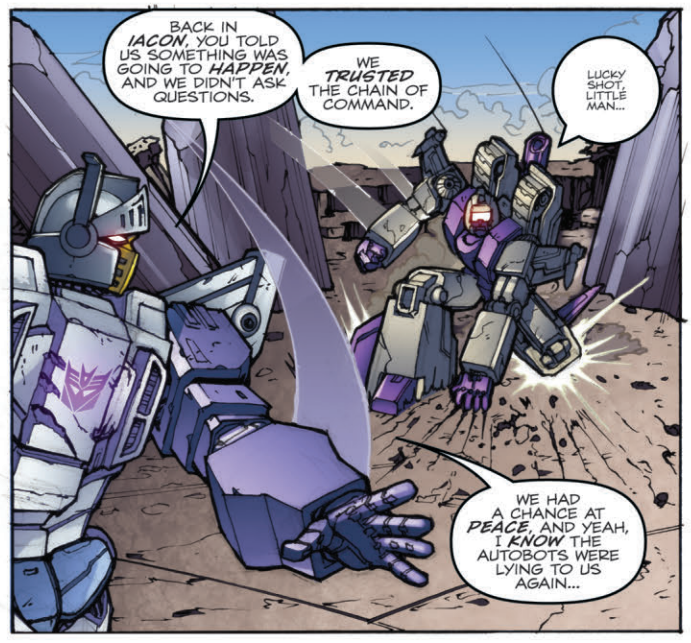

...RESULTS MATTER. CONTACT ME WHEN THE MISSION IS COMPLETED, JHIAXUS.
I NEVER DID TRUST A GUY I COULDN'T SMELL...
THE SURFACE OF CYBERTRON. SOME DISTANCE AWAY.
...BUT SHOCKWAVE HASN'T EVEN GOT A NOSE. THAT'S A LOT WORSE.
I WAS WRONG TO CONVINCE YOU TO FOLLOW HIS LEAD, RAVAGE.
YEAH, PRETTY MUCH.
EH. WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES.
"WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES"? SERIOUSLY? THAT MAKES THINGS OKAY?
LOOK AT US. WE LOOK LIKE... LIKE...
LIKE THE LAST TIME YOU AND SHOCKWAVE HATCHED A PLAN.
WHEN WE STARTED EATING EACH OTHER FOR ENERGON.
MEGATRON'S GONE. TURMOIL'S DEAD. STARSCREAM'S TURNED TRAITOR. SKYWARP IS BARELY HANGING TOGETHER.
NOBODY KNOWS WHERE THE CONSTRUCTICONS ARE.
THE DECEPTICON JUSTICE DIVISION IS OUT THERE SOMEWHERE—WHAT DO WE DO WHEN THEY SHOW UP?!


WE WILL BEHAVE LIKE DECEPTICONS.
WE WILL NOT COWER IN FEAR OF MEGATRON'S JUSTICE DIVISION. WE WILL NOT LAMENT THE DEAD.
SHOCKWAVE DESERTED US IN OUR HOUR OF NEED.
WE WILL KILL HIM.
FORGET THAT—WE GO TO IACON AND WE TAKE IT BACK!
LET SHOCKWAVE DO WHAT HE WANTS—STARSCREAM'S THE TRAITOR!
YEAH—ANYBODY THINK THE NEUTRALS CAN HOLD US DOWN AGAIN?
RETAKING IACON WILL FORCE THE AUTOBOTS TO MOVE AGAINST US. WE WILL NOT FIGHT A BATTLE WE CANNOT WIN.
BUT REGARDLESS—HAS SOMETHING LED YOU TO BELIEVE I HAVE INSTITUTED DEMOCRACY? WE ARE NOT AUTOBOTS.
THIS IS NOT THE EARLY DAYS. WE DO NOT FIGHT FOR LEADERSHIP.
LEADERSHIP IS MINE.

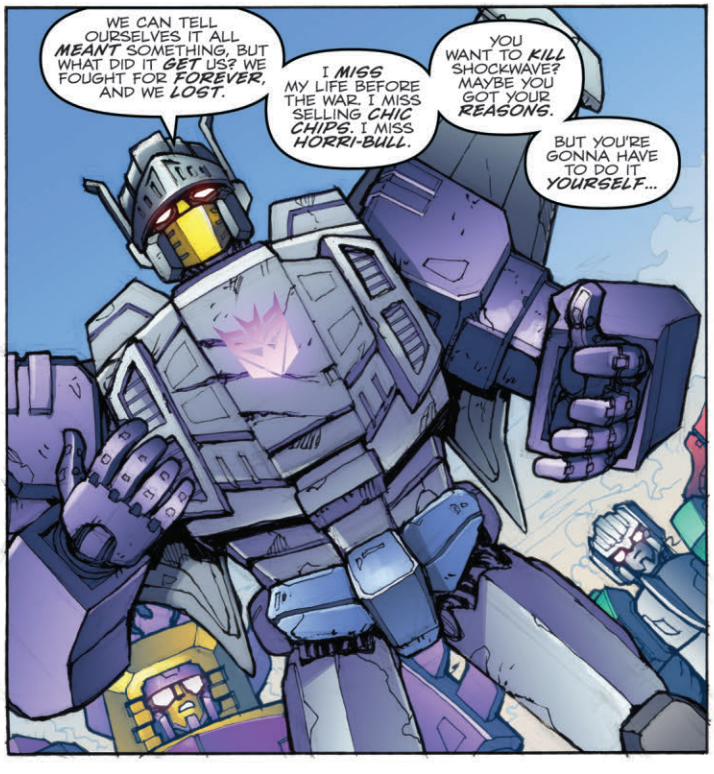
YEAH, RIGHT!
POW
HANDS OFF THE BOSS!
RAARGH!
SMAK
YEAH!
YOU CAN'T HIDE BEHIND YOUR CASSETTES FOREVER, SOUNDWAVE!
COMMAND OF THE DECEPTICONS ISN'T SOMETHING YOU GET FROM A SET OF RULES!
IT'S SOMETHING YOU EARN!
CHAKKA
CHAKKA


BUT YOU, SOUNDWAVE?
YOU WERE ONLY EVER OUT FOR YOUR OWN GLORY!
YOU SAY THIS ISN'T THE OLD DAYS?
THOSE WERE THE GOOD DAYS.
RRGRRGR!
SKRACH
BEFORE WE STARTED PLAYING LIKE THE AUTOBOTS WERE OUR FRIENDS.
LOOK WHERE THAT GOT US.
WE'LL DUMP YOUR CARCASS ON JUNKION AND BE DONE WITH YOU!


ENOUGH FIGHTING!

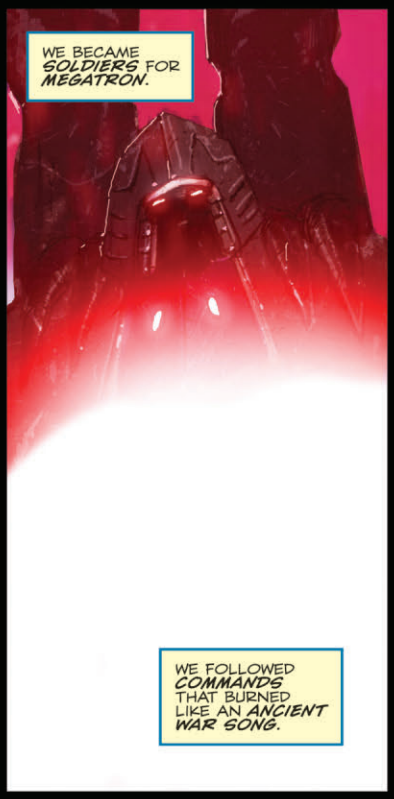

BACK IN IACON, YOU TOLD US SOMETHING WAS GOING TO HAPPEN, AND WE DIDN'T ASK QUESTIONS.
WE TRUSTED THE CHAIN OF COMMAND.
LUCKY SHOT, LITTLE MAN...
WE HAD A CHANCE AT PEACE, AND YEAH, I KNOW THE AUTOBOTS WERE LYING TO US AGAIN...

...BUT WE COULDA GOT WHAT WE WANTED. WE COULDA BEEN A PART OF SOMETHING!
INSTEAD, WE LOST IT ALL.
THOSE NEUTRALS... THEY WERE RIGHT, WEREN'T THEY?
ALL WE ARE IS A FORCE OF DESTRUCTION, FIGHTING ANOTHER FORCE OF DESTRUCTION.


WE CAN TELL OURSELVES IT ALL MEANT SOMETHING, BUT WHAT DID IT GET US? WE FOUGHT FOR FOREVER, AND WE LOST.
I MISS MY LIFE BEFORE THE WAR. I MISS SELLING CHIC CHIPS. I MISS HORRI-BULL.
YOU WANT TO KILL SHOCKWAVE? MAYBE YOU GOT YOUR REASONS.
BUT YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO DO IT YOURSELF...

...BECAUSE YOU'RE ALL OUT OF SOLDIERS.

SOLDIERS.
ONCE, WE WERE LABORERS, FIGHTERS, INTELLECTUALS... ONCE WE ALL HAD LIVES.
LIVES WE WALKED AWAY FROM...
...FOR A SHARED BELIEF—THAT INEQUALITY COULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO STAND.


WE BECAME SOLDIERS FOR MEGATRON.
WE FOLLOWED COMMANDS THAT BURNED LIKE AN ANCIENT WAR SONG.

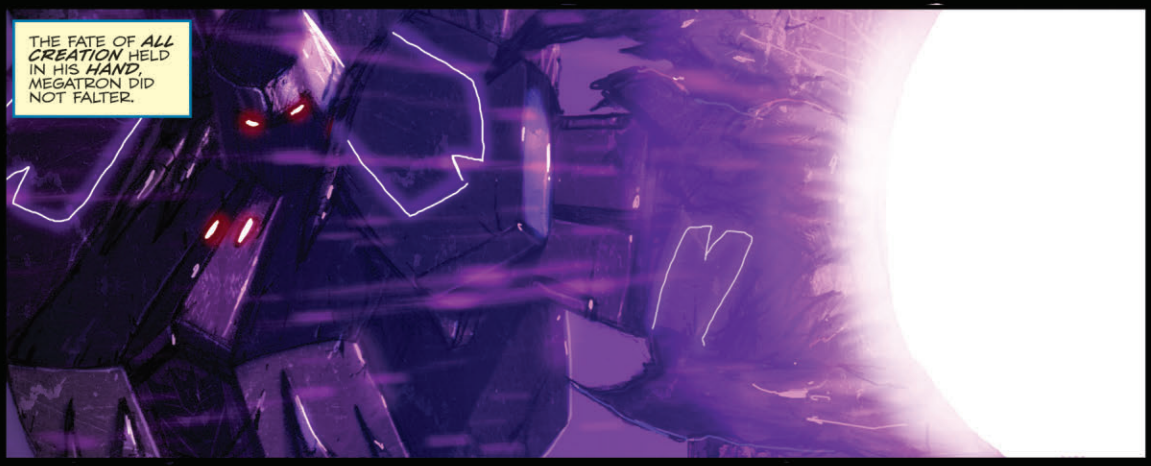
WE FOLLOWED HIM—TO BATTLE THE MAD ANCIENT CALLED GALVATRON.
GALVATRON: HERO OF THE FIRST CYBERTRONIAN CIVIL WAR, VANQUISHER OF THE ANCIENT HEADMASTERS.
GALVATRON, WHO UNLEASHED PRIMORDIAL ENERGIES THAT TWISTED OUR UNITY OF PURPOSE...

...PERVERTED IT INTO SOMETHING EVIL.

ONLY ONE STOOD HIS GROUND:
MEGATRON OF TARN, WHO FORMED THE DECEPTICONS IN THE FACE OF AUTOBOT OPPRESSION.
WHO GAVE ME PURPOSE.
AS HE GAVE TO US ALL.

AGAINST HIM... AGAINST OUR VERY PURPOSE...
...WE WERE DRAWN TOGETHER.
DRAWN INTO ONE UNSTOPPABLE FORM.
STRIPPED OF OUR FREE WILL, WE COULD ONLY WATCH, LISTEN, FEEL—AS WE WERE TURNED AGAINST THE OBJECT OF OUR LOYALTY.

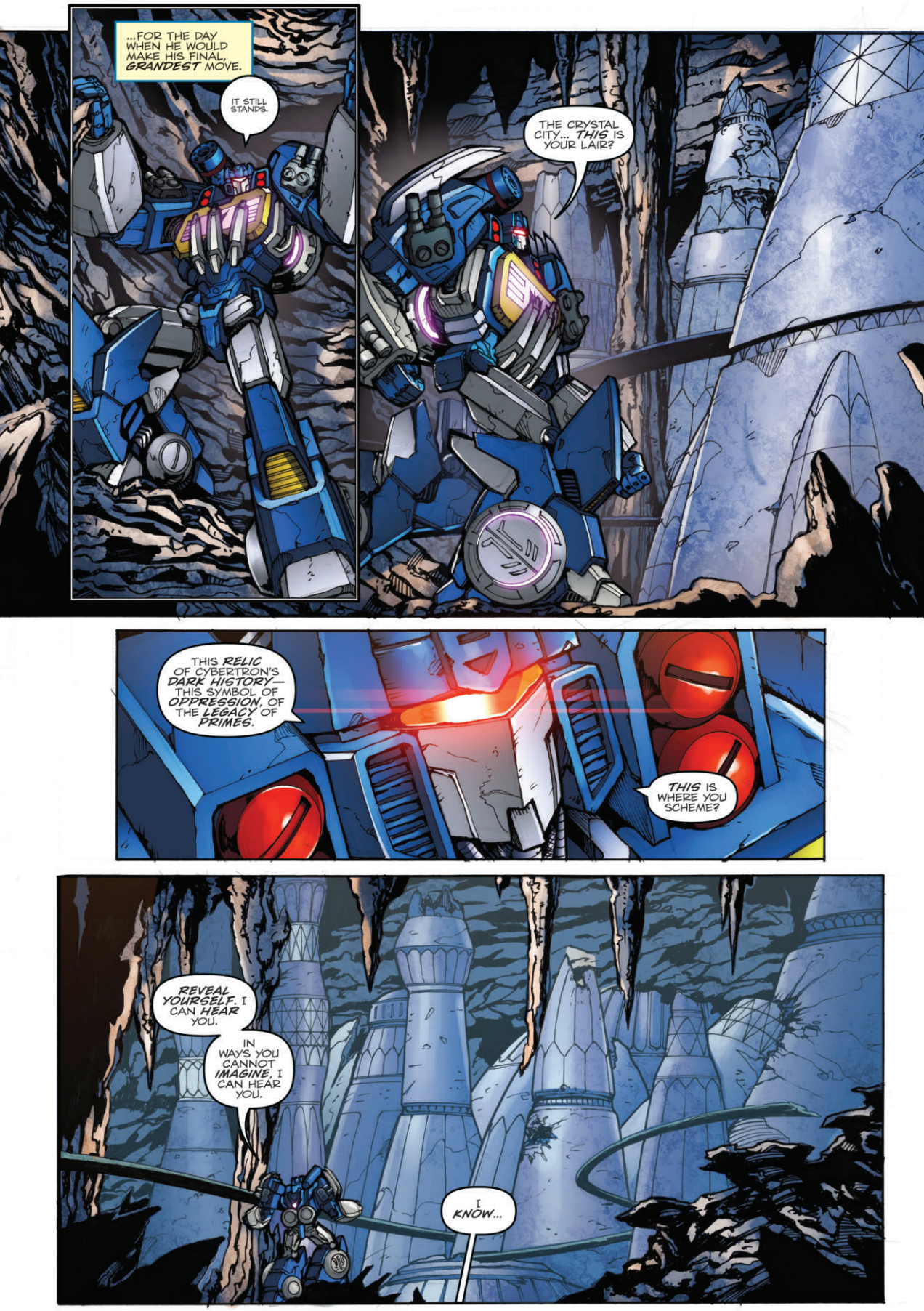
AND WHERE NO ONE COULD POSSIBLY SUCCEED—MEGATRON STOOD HIS GROUND.
FROM WITHIN THE MONSTER I COULD WATCH—HEAR—FEEL EVERYTHING.
I COULD NOT BLOCK OUT THE SHRIEKING OF MY BROTHERS' SPARKS.
NOR COULD I IGNORE THE COLD, FLUID HEROISM OF HIS.
MY BROTHERS, TOGETHER—WE HAD THE POWER TO SHATTER A WORLD.
AND MEGATRON STOOD HIS GROUND.


THE FATE OF ALL CREATION HELD IN HIS HAND, MEGATRON DID NOT FALTER.

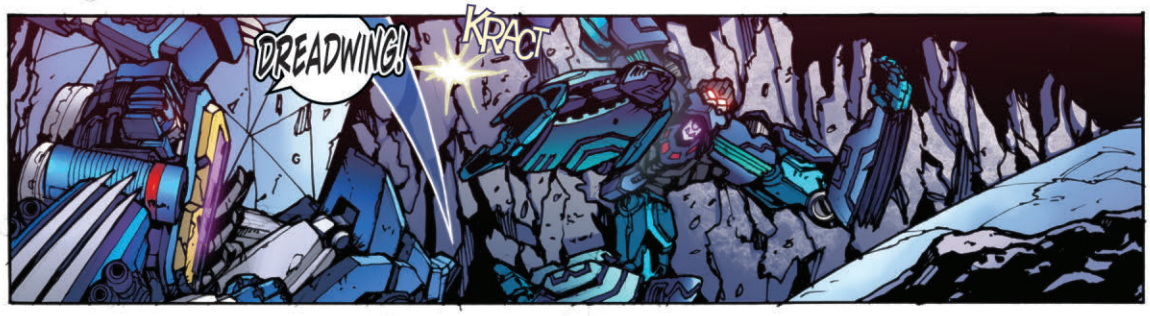
HE STOPPED THE UNSTOPPABLE.
BUT ONE OTHER STOOD APART.

ONE OTHER POSSESSED A VISION SO UNIQUE, SO PERFECT...
...A VISION SO SINGULAR, THAT HE COULD NEVER BELONG WITH US.

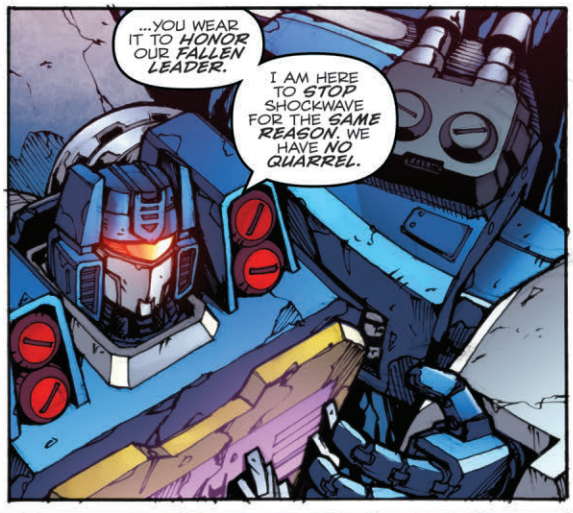
AND SHOCKWAVE WATCHED IT ALL.
ALONE, PLANNING...

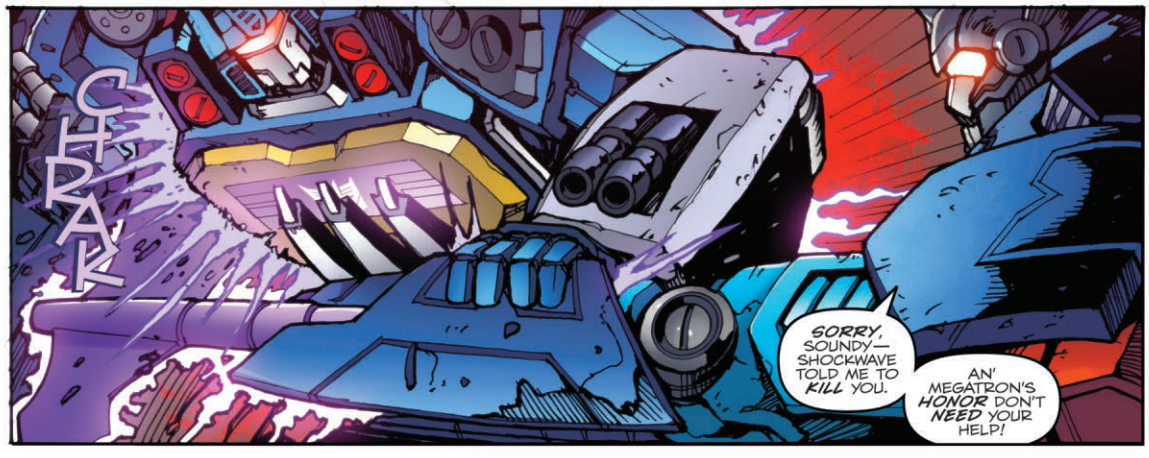

...FOR THE DAY WHEN HE WOULD MAKE HIS FINAL, GRANDEST MOVE.
IT STILL STANDS.
THE CRYSTAL CITY... THIS IS YOUR LAIR?
THIS RELIC OF CYBERTRON'S DARK HISTORY—THIS SYMBOL OF OPPRESSION, OF THE LEGACY OF PRIMES.
THIS IS WHERE YOU SCHEME?
REVEAL YOURSELF. I CAN HEAR YOU.
IN WAYS YOU CANNOT IMAGINE, I CAN HEAR YOU.
I KNOW...

...I JUST WANTED TO MAKE A COOL-ASS ENTRANCE.
CRUNCH

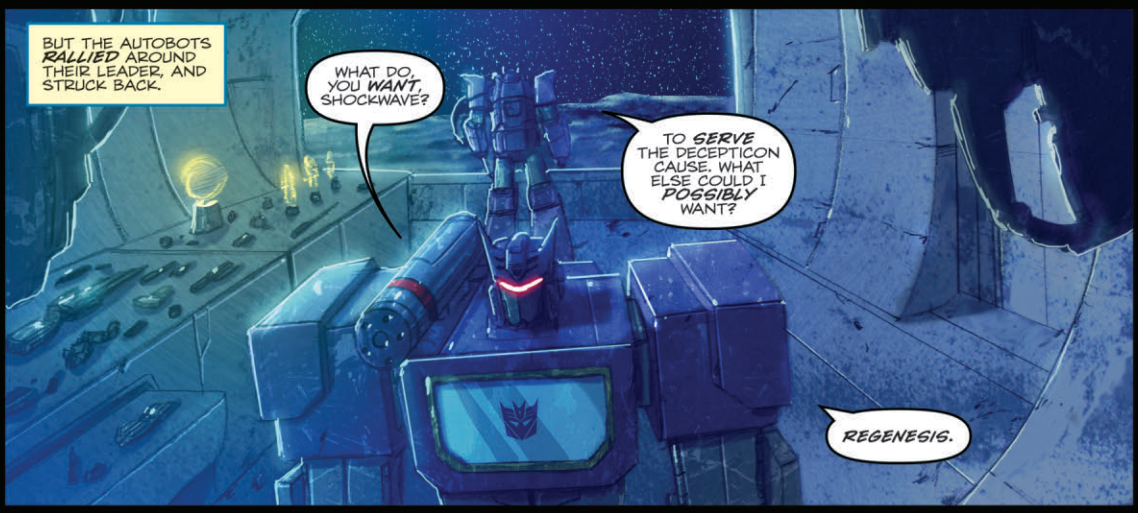

DREADWING!
KRACT

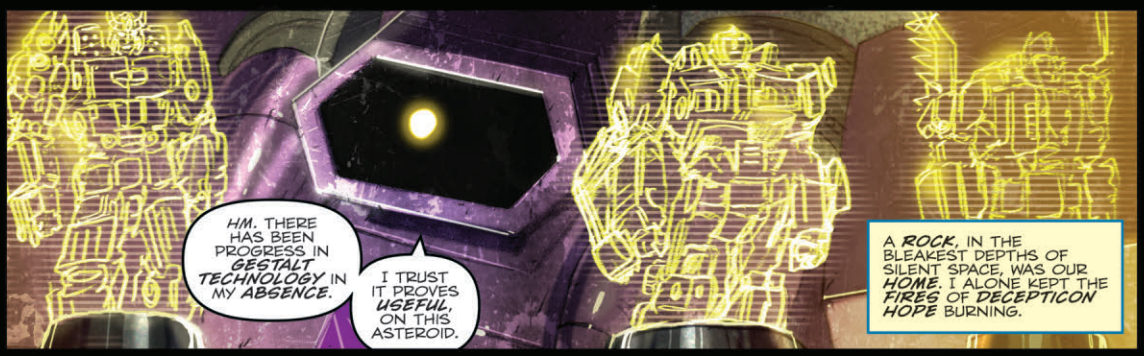
HEH. DON'T WEAR IT OUT, SOUNDWAVE.
NICE PUNCH— FOR A LAME-O.
YOUR FORM MIMICS THE BODY I DESIGNED FOR GREAT MEGATRON...

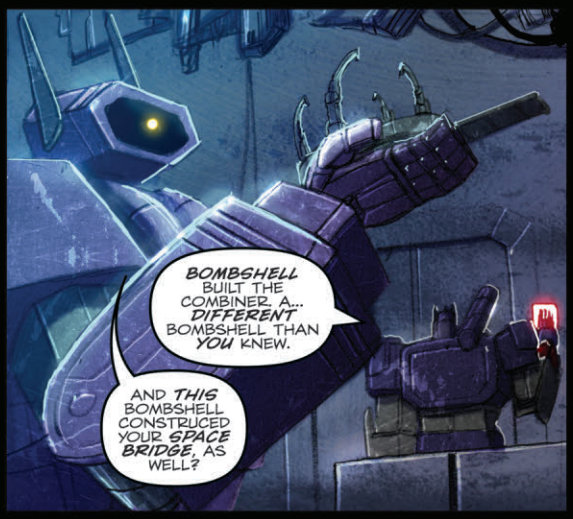

...YOU WEAR IT TO HONOR OUR FALLEN LEADER.
I AM HERE TO STOP SHOCKWAVE FOR THE SAME REASON. WE HAVE NO QUARREL.

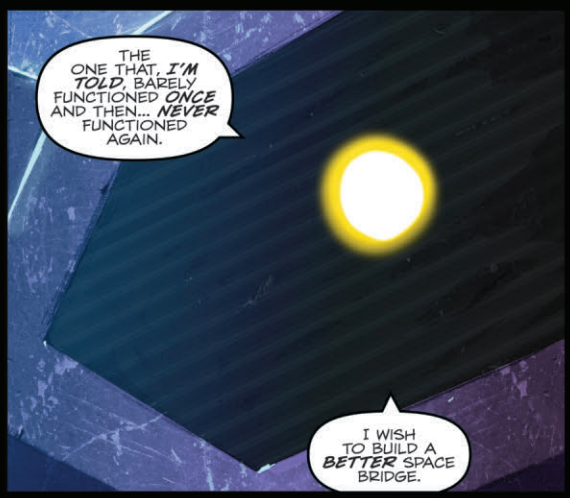

CHRAK
SORRY, SOUNDY— SHOCKWAVE TOLD ME TO KILL YOU.
AN' MEGATRON'S HONOR DON'T NEED YOUR HELP!

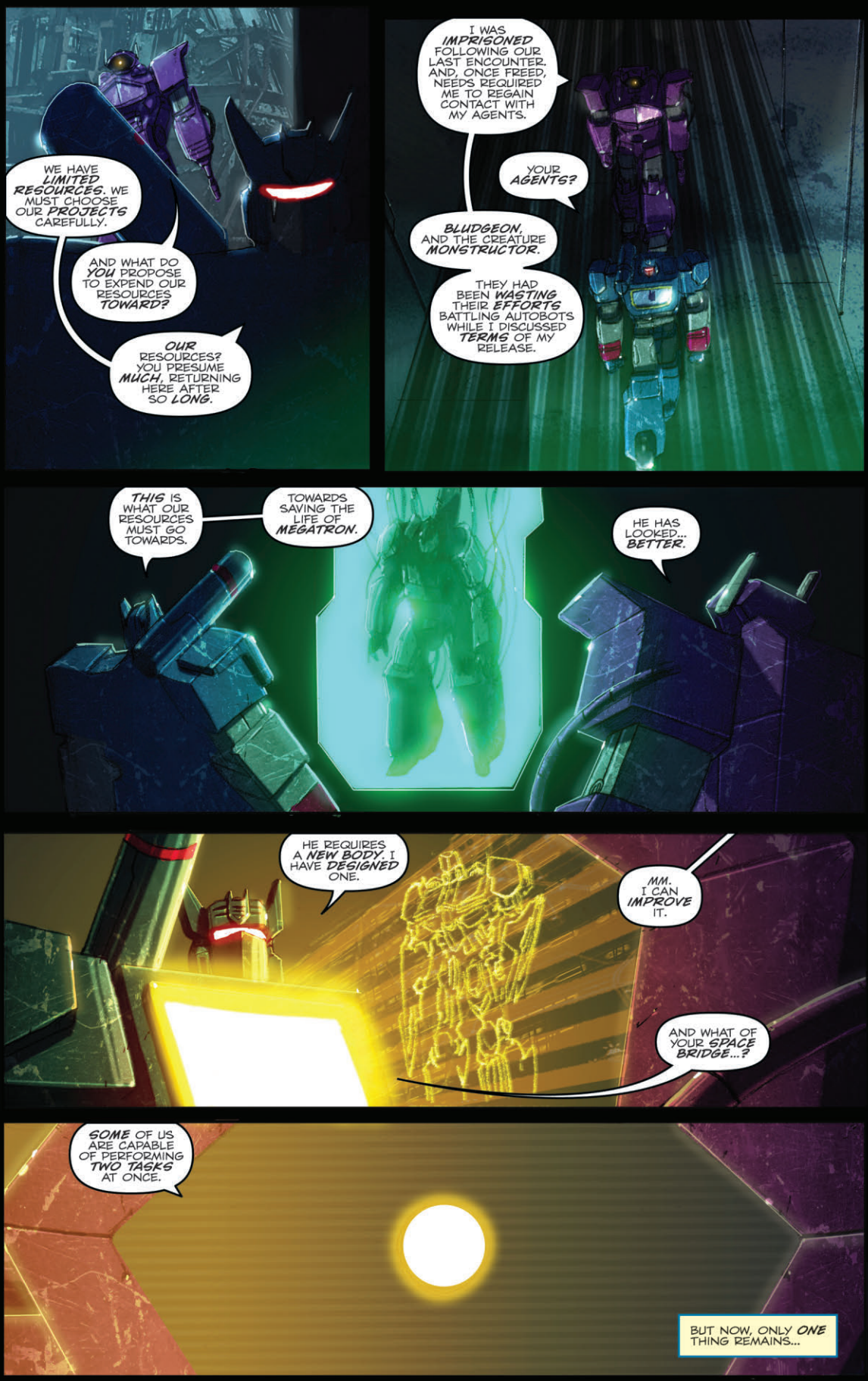
I NEED NO HELP.
INDEED, SOUNDWAVE. IS THAT DECEPTICON EATING THE OTHER ONE?
BEFORE OUR FINAL BATTLE ON CYBERTRON... OUR VICTORY HAD SEEMED ASSURED.
ALL DECEPTICON RESOURCES SENT AGAINST THE AUTOBOTS—THE GREATEST BATTLE RESERVED FOR THOSE OF US ON THE PLANET EARTH.


BUT THE AUTOBOTS RALLIED AROUND THEIR LEADER, AND STRUCK BACK.
WHAT DO, YOU WANT, SHOCKWAVE?
TO SERVE THE DECEPTICON CAUSE. WHAT ELSE COULD I POSSIBLY WANT?
REGENESIS.


HM. THERE HAS BEEN PROGRESS IN GESTALT TECHNOLOGY IN MY ABSENCE.
I TRUST IT PROVES USEFUL, ON THIS ASTEROID.
A ROCK, IN THE BLEAKEST DEPTHS OF SILENT SPACE, WAS OUR HOME. I ALONE KEPT THE FIRES OF DECEPTICON HOPE BURNING.

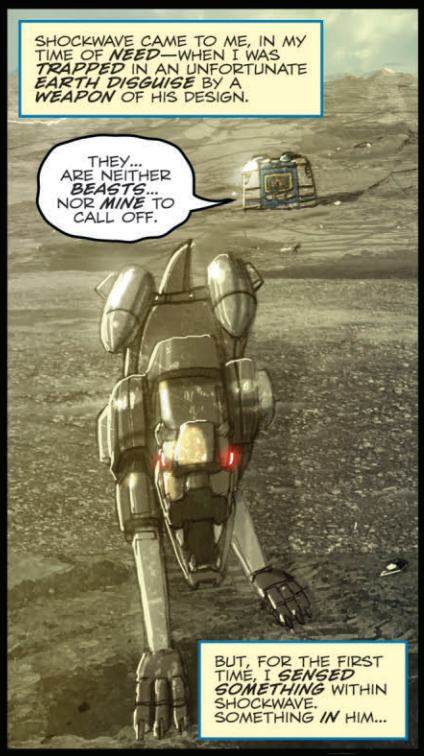

BOMBSHELL BUILT THE COMBINER. A... DIFFERENT BOMBSHELL THAN YOU KNEW.
AND THIS BOMBSHELL CONSTRUCED YOUR SPACE BRIDGE, AS WELL?

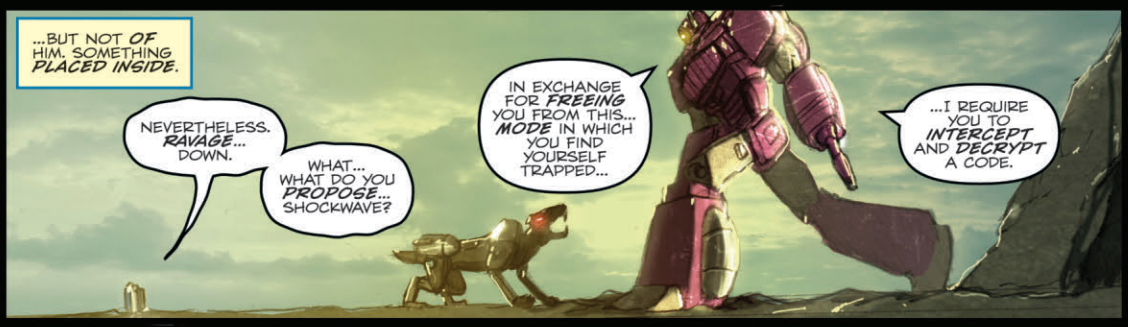

THE ONE THAT, I'M TOLD, BARELY FUNCTIONED ONCE AND THEN... NEVER FUNCTIONED AGAIN.
I WISH TO BUILD A BETTER SPACE BRIDGE.


WE HAVE LIMITED RESOURCES. WE MUST CHOOSE OUR PROJECTS CAREFULLY.
AND WHAT DO YOU PROPOSE TO EXPEND OUR RESOURCES TOWARD?
OUR RESOURCES? YOU PRESUME MUCH, RETURNING HERE AFTER SO LONG.
I WAS IMPRISONED FOLLOWING OUR LAST ENCOUNTER. AND, ONCE FREED, NEEDS REQUIRED ME TO REGAIN CONTACT WITH MY AGENTS.
YOUR AGENTS?
BLUDGEON, AND THE CREATURE MONSTRUCTOR.
THEY HAD BEEN WASTING THEIR EFFORTS BATTLING AUTOBOTS WHILE I DISCUSSED TERMS OF MY RELEASE.
THIS IS WHAT OUR RESOURCES MUST GO TOWARDS.
TOWARDS SAVING THE LIFE OF MEGATRON.
HE HAS LOOKED... BETTER.
HE REQUIRES A NEW BODY. I HAVE DESIGNED ONE.
MM. I CAN IMPROVE IT.
AND WHAT OF YOUR SPACE BRIDGE...?
SOME OF US ARE CAPABLE OF PERFORMING TWO TASKS AT ONCE.
BUT NOW, ONLY ONE THING REMAINS...

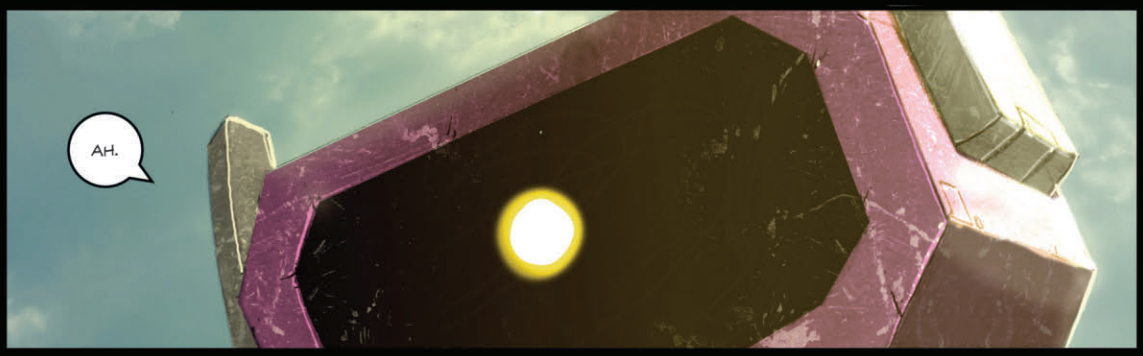
...AND SHOCKWAVE MUST BE STOPPED.
NO CASSETTES, HUH?
WHAT'CHA GONNA DO, SOUNDWAVE?
THUGGA
THUGGA
TRY TA TALK YOUR WAY OUTTA THIS?
CHAGGA CHAGGA
NO.
IMPRESSIVE...
...DREADWING HARDLY STOOD A CHANCE.

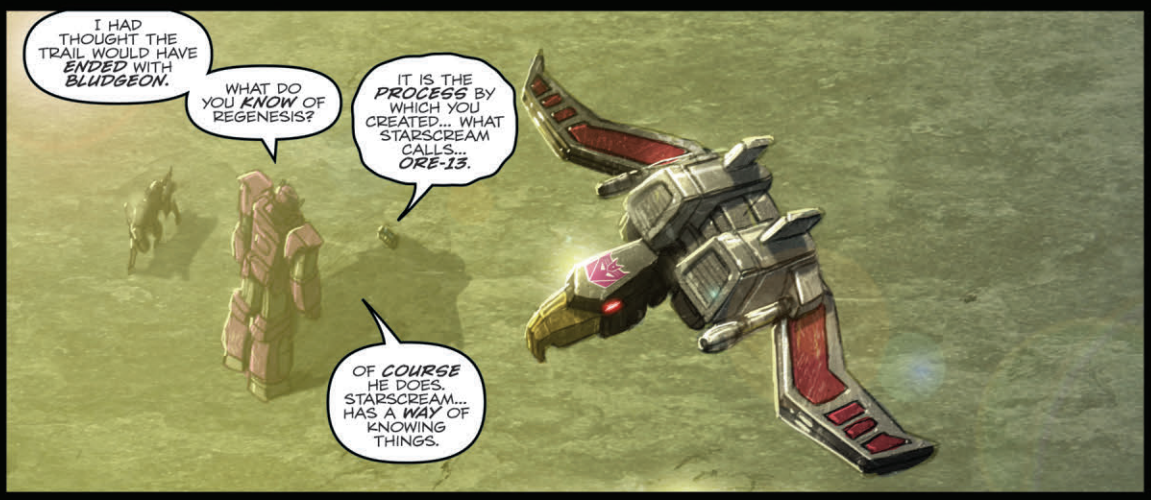
YOU DO NOT STAND A CHANCE.
TRAPPED IN THIS FORM, YOUR LAST RESERVES OF POWER FAILING...
...BUT I CAN HELP YOU.
IF YOU CALL OFF YOUR BEASTS.
I HAD BEEN PARTIALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR SHOCKWAVE'S IMPRISONMENT, PRIOR TO OUR TIME ON THE ASTEROID.
I ENABLED HIS DOWNFALL, AT THE VERY LEAST.


SHOCKWAVE CAME TO ME, IN MY TIME OF NEED—WHEN I WAS TRAPPED IN AN UNFORTUNATE EARTH DISGUISE BY A WEAPON OF HIS DESIGN.
THEY... ARE NEITHER BEASTS... NOR MINE TO CALL OFF.
BUT, FOR THE FIRST TIME, I SENSED SOMETHING WITHIN SHOCKWAVE. SOMETHING IN HIM...


...BUT NOT OF HIM. SOMETHING PLACED INSIDE.
NEVERTHELESS. RAVAGE... DOWN.
WHAT... WHAT DO YOU PROPOSE... SHOCKWAVE?
IN EXCHANGE FOR FREEING YOU FROM THIS... MODE IN WHICH YOU FIND YOURSELF TRAPPED...
...I REQUIRE YOU TO INTERCEPT AND DECRYPT A CODE.

THE DETONATION SIGNAL FOR... THE BOMB THE EARTHLINGS... HAVE IMPLANTED IN YOUR HEAD.
I WILL HELP YOU... IF YOU TELL ME OF... REGENESIS.


AH.

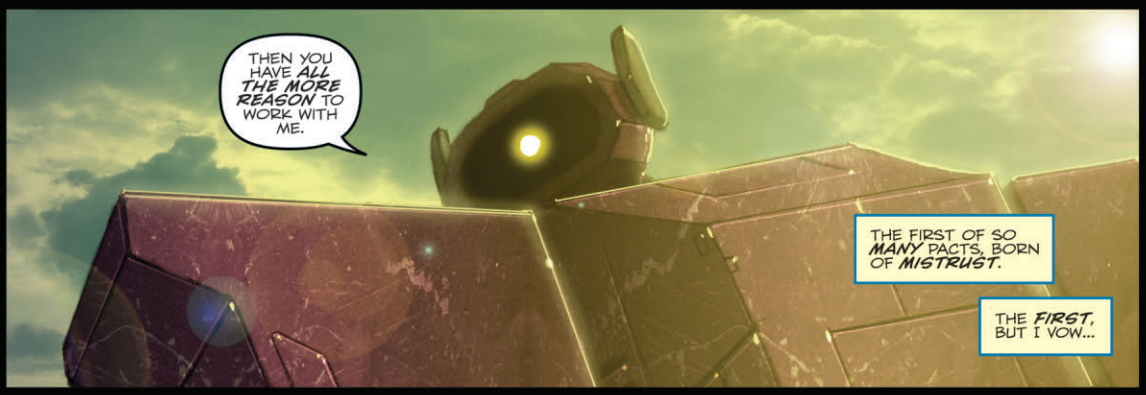

I HAD THOUGHT THE TRAIL WOULD HAVE ENDED WITH BLUDGEON.
WHAT DO YOU KNOW OF REGENESIS?
IT IS THE PROCESS BY WHICH YOU CREATED... WHAT STARSCREAM CALLS... ORE-13.
OF COURSE HE DOES. STARSCREAM... HAS A WAY OF KNOWING THINGS.

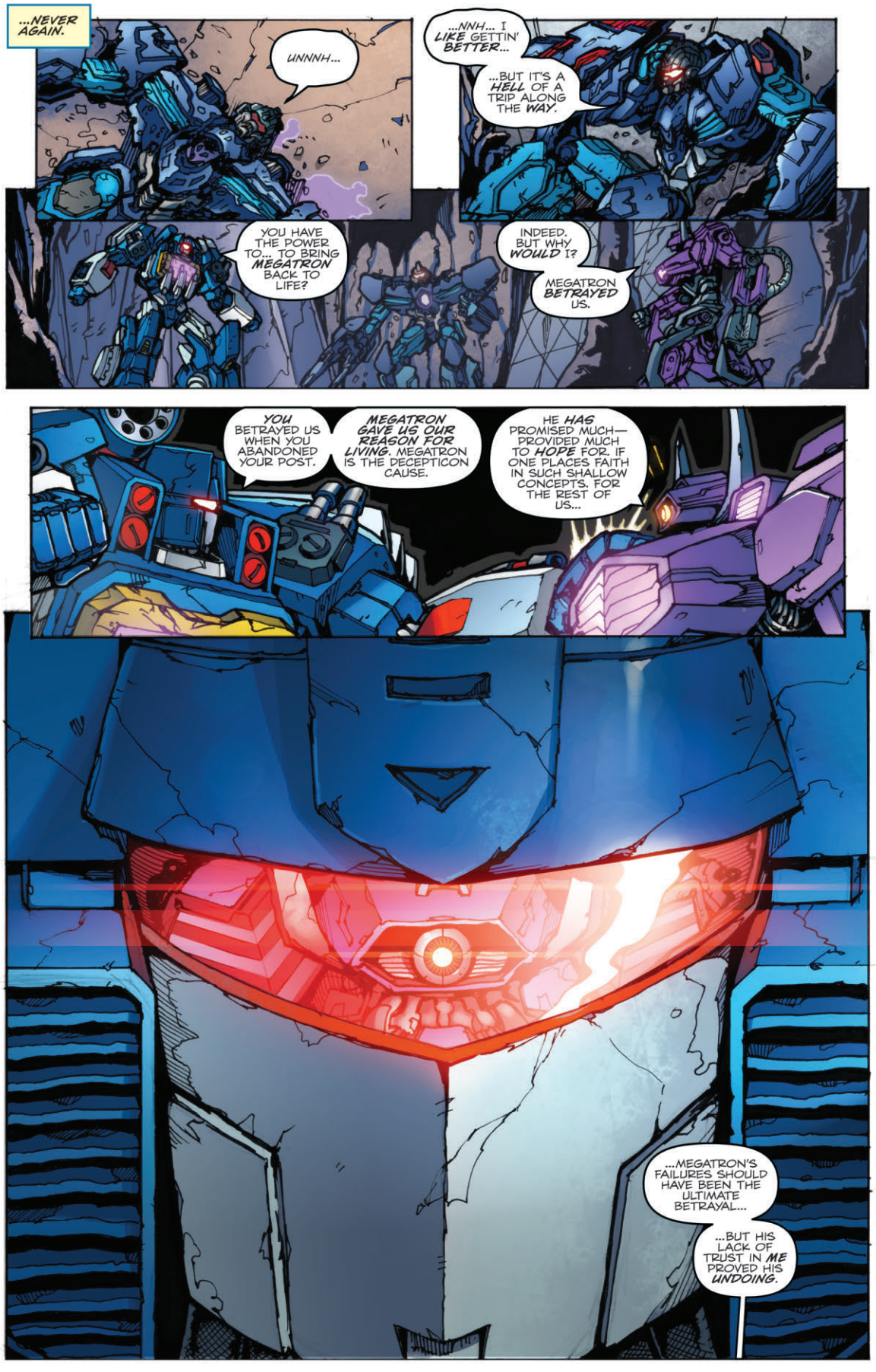
I CAN SENSE IT ALL AROUND THIS PLANET. LIKE ENERGON... BUT VOLATILE. POWERFUL, YET UNSAFE.
BUT REGENESIS... IS MORE THAN AN ENERGON SUBSTITUTE.

MUCH.
TELL ME... OR I WILL NOT HELP YOU.

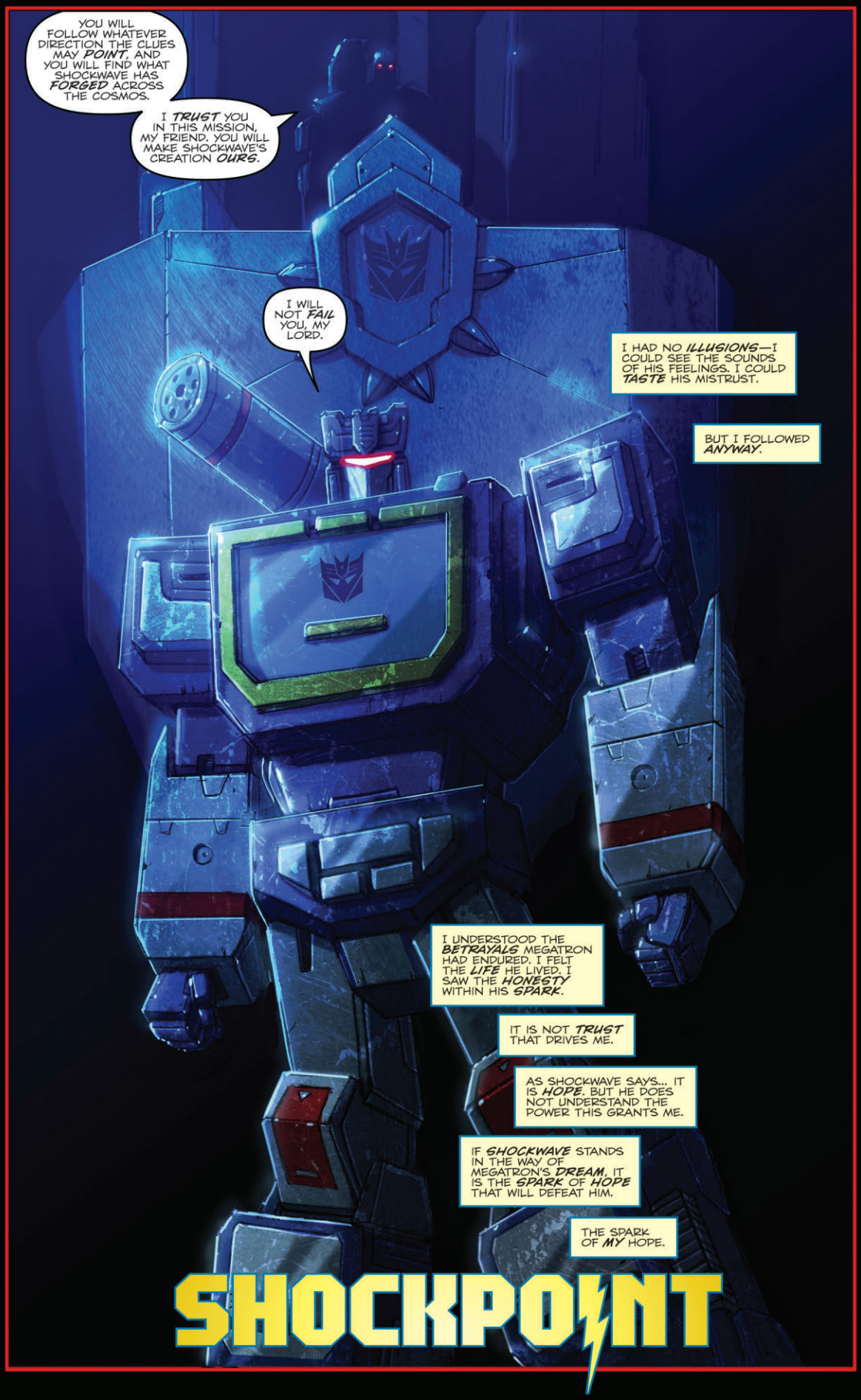
NO.
WHAT?

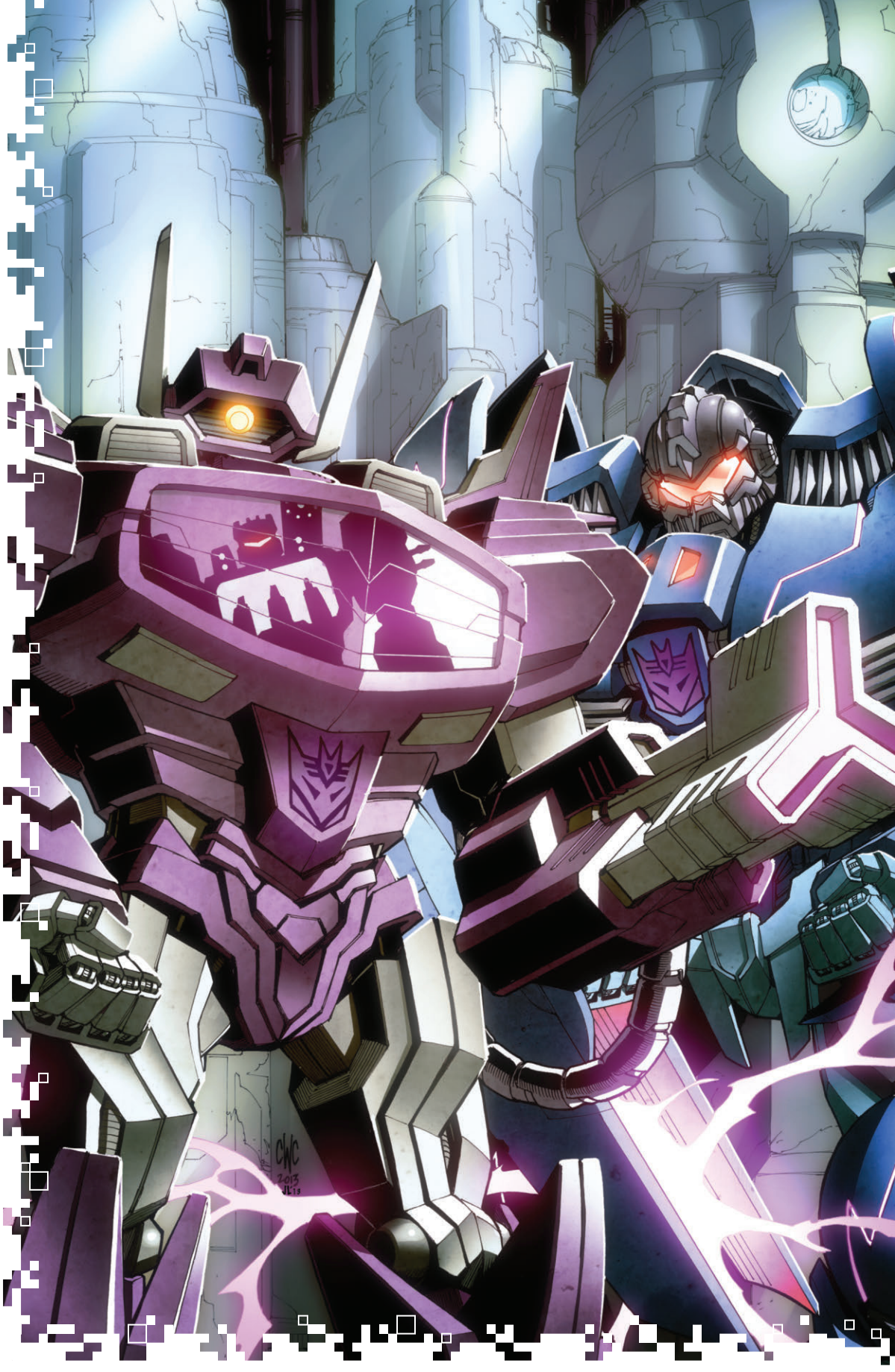
NO. IF YOU DO NOT HELP ME, I WILL DIE. THUS, THE INFORMATION WILL BE LOST. YOUR ONLY GOAL WILL BE LOST.
IT IS NOT INFORMATION THAT I...
...I BELIEVE IN THE DECEPTICON CAUSE, SHOCKWAVE.


THEN YOU HAVE ALL THE MORE REASON TO WORK WITH ME.
THE FIRST OF SO MANY PACTS, BORN OF MISTRUST.
THE FIRST, BUT I VOW...


...NEVER AGAIN.
UNNNH...
...NNH... I LIKE GETTIN' BETTER...
...BUT IT'S A HELL OF A TRIP ALONG THE WAY.
YOU HAVE THE POWER TO... TO BRING MEGATRON BACK TO LIFE?
INDEED. BUT WHY WOULD I?
MEGATRON BETRAYED US.
YOU BETRAYED US WHEN YOU ABANDONED YOUR POST.
MEGATRON GAVE US OUR REASON FOR LIVING. MEGATRON IS THE DECEPTICON CAUSE.
HE HAS PROMISED MUCH— PROVIDED MUCH TO HOPE FOR. IF ONE PLACES FAITH IN SUCH SHALLOW CONCEPTS. FOR THE REST OF US...
...MEGATRON'S FAILURES SHOULD HAVE BEEN THE ULTIMATE BETRAYAL...
...BUT HIS LACK OF TRUST IN ME PROVED HIS UNDOING.

A LACK OF TRUST... IS EXACTLY WHAT LED ME TO BE STUCK ON EARTH...
YOU MUST DEFEND THE CAUSE THIS DAY, BLUDGEON.
YOU WILL CONDUCT A FULL AND PAINSTAKING INVESTIGATION, INTO ALL SHOCKWAVE'S CURRENT AND ARCHIVED PROJECTS.
I WANT TO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT HE WAS WORKING ON. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
OH... COMPLETELY.
VERY WELL. YOU ARE DISMISSED.
SOUNDWAVE...
...KEEP AN OPTIC ON HIM.
YES, LORD MEGATRON. ONLY ONE?
YOU FIND HUMOR IN THIS SITUATION?
MY APOLOGIES. I ONLY MEANT...
I KNOW WHAT YOU MEANT. YOU NEVER TRUSTED SHOCKWAVE. AND WHEN HE DISAPPEARED...
HE HAD SOMETHING PLANNED.
OF COURSE HE DID.
WHATEVER SHOCKWAVE HAS CREATED, WE WILL USE IT FOR THE GOOD OF THE DECEPTICON CAUSE.
EQUALITY FOR ALL. FREEDOM THROUGH TYRANNY, MY FRIEND.


YOU WILL FOLLOW WHATEVER DIRECTION THE CLUES MAY POINT, AND YOU WILL FIND WHAT SHOCKWAVE HAS FORGED ACROSS THE COSMOS.
I TRUST YOU IN THIS MISSION, MY FRIEND. YOU WILL MAKE SHOCKWAVE'S CREATION OURS.
I WILL NOT FAIL YOU, MY LORD.
I HAD NO ILLUSIONS—I COULD SEE THE SOUNDS OF HIS FEELINGS. I COULD TASTE HIS MISTRUST.
BUT I FOLLOWED ANYWAY.
I UNDERSTOOD THE BETRAYALS MEGATRON HAD ENDURED. I FELT THE LIFE HE LIVED. I SAW THE HONESTY WITHIN HIS SPARK.
IT IS NOT TRUST THAT DRIVES ME.
AS SHOCKWAVE SAYS... IT IS HOPE. BUT HE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE POWER THIS GRANTS ME.
IF SHOCKWAVE STANDS IN THE WAY OF MEGATRON'S DREAM, IT IS THE SPARK OF HOPE THAT WILL DEFEAT HIM.
THE SPARK OF MY HOPE.
SHOCKPOINT




ROBOTS IN DISGUISE #21 COVER B

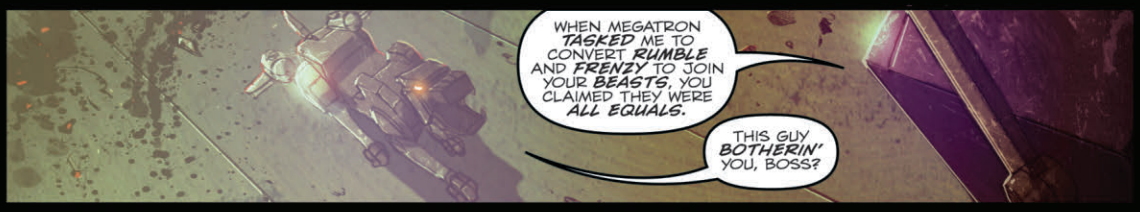
by **CASEY W. COLLER** Colors by **JOANA LAFUENTE**

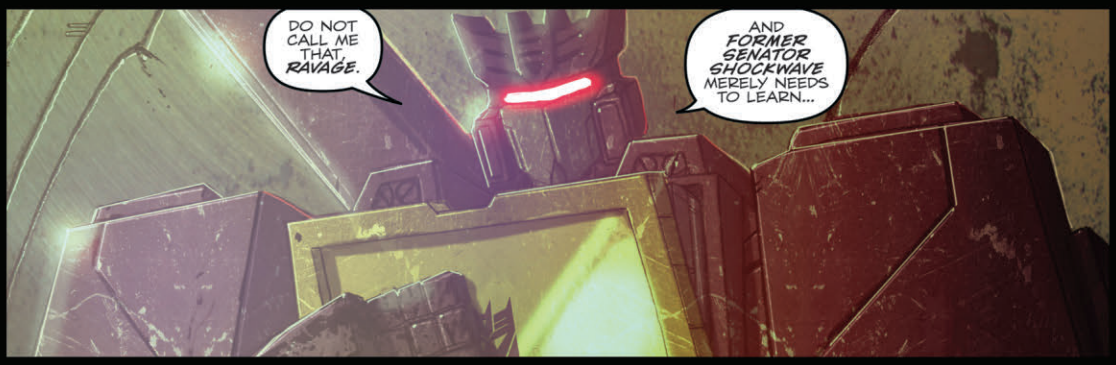
□ ROBOTS IN DISGUISE #22 COVER A

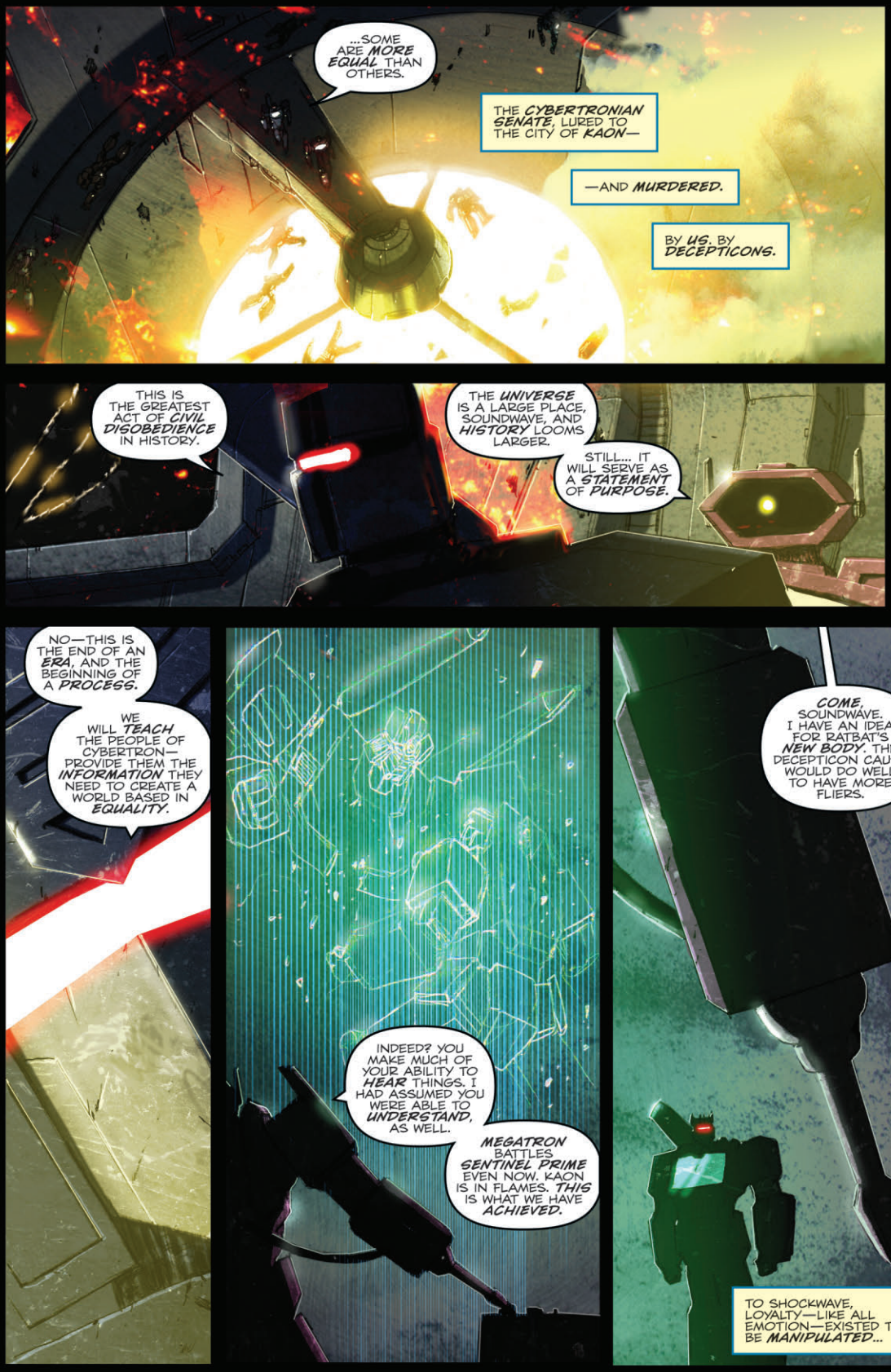
by **ANDREW GRIFFITH**

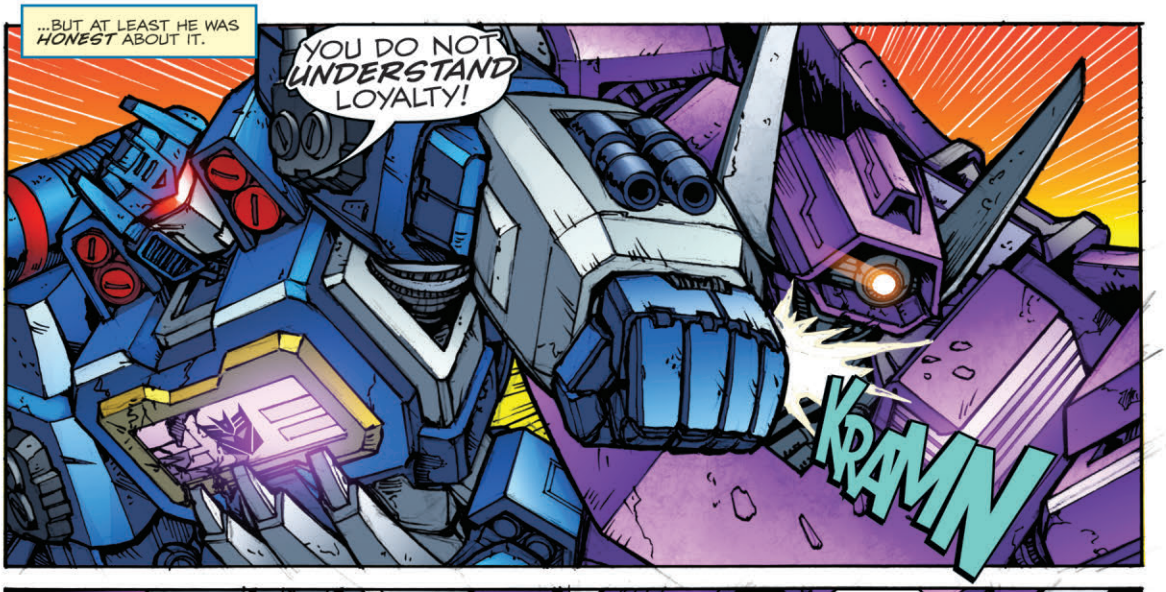
CYBERTRON. FOUR MILLION YEARS AGO.
THE SENATE FELL IN SECONDS.
TELL ME, SOUNDWAVE— WHAT DO YOU PLAN ON DOING WITH THAT ONE?

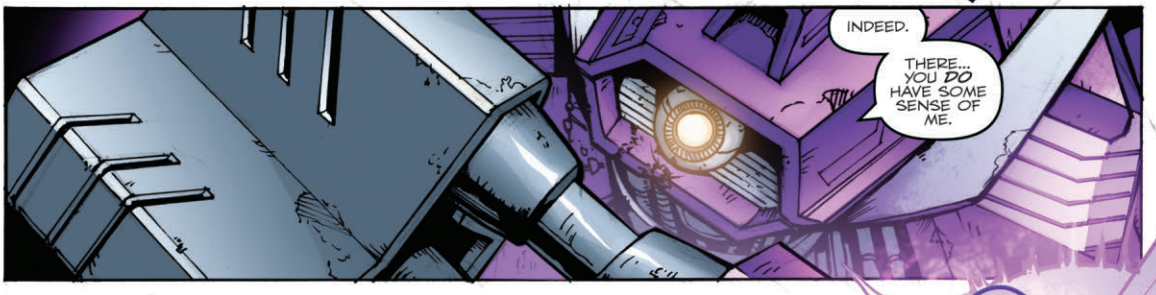
SENATOR RATBAT SHALL...
NO. JUST RATBAT, NOW.
HE SHALL SERVE ME, SHOCKWAVE.
HE SHALL BECOME ONE OF MY CASSETTES.
SERVE YOU?


WHEN MEGATRON TASKED ME TO CONVERT RUMBLE AND FRENZY TO JOIN YOUR BEASTS, YOU CLAIMED THEY WERE ALL EQUALS.
THIS GUY BOTHERIN' YOU, BOSS?


DO NOT CALL ME THAT, RAVAGE.
AND FORMER SENATOR SHOCKWAVE MERELY NEEDS TO LEARN...

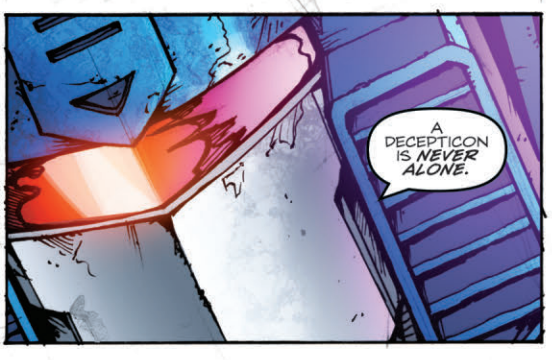

...SOME ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS.
THE CYBERTRONIAN SENATE, LURED TO THE CITY OF KAON—
—AND MURDERED.
BY US. BY DECEPTICONS.
THIS IS THE GREATEST ACT OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN HISTORY.
THE UNIVERSE IS A LARGE PLACE, SOUNDWAVE, AND HISTORY LOOMS LARGER.
STILL... IT WILL SERVE AS A STATEMENT OF PURPOSE.
NO—THIS IS THE END OF AN ERA, AND THE BEGINNING OF A PROCESS.
WE WILL TEACH THE PEOPLE OF CYBERTRON—PROVIDE THEM THE INFORMATION THEY NEED TO CREATE A WORLD BASED IN EQUALITY.
INDEED? YOU MAKE MUCH OF YOUR ABILITY TO HEAR THINGS. I HAD ASSUMED YOU WERE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND, AS WELL.
MEGATRON BATTLES SENTINEL PRIME EVEN NOW. KAON IS IN FLAMES. THIS IS WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED.
COME, SOUNDWAVE. I HAVE AN IDEA FOR RATBAT'S NEW BODY. THE DECEPTICON CAUSE WOULD DO WELL TO HAVE MORE FLIERS.
TO SHOCKWAVE, LOYALTY—LIKE ALL EMOTION—EXISTED TO BE MANIPULATED...

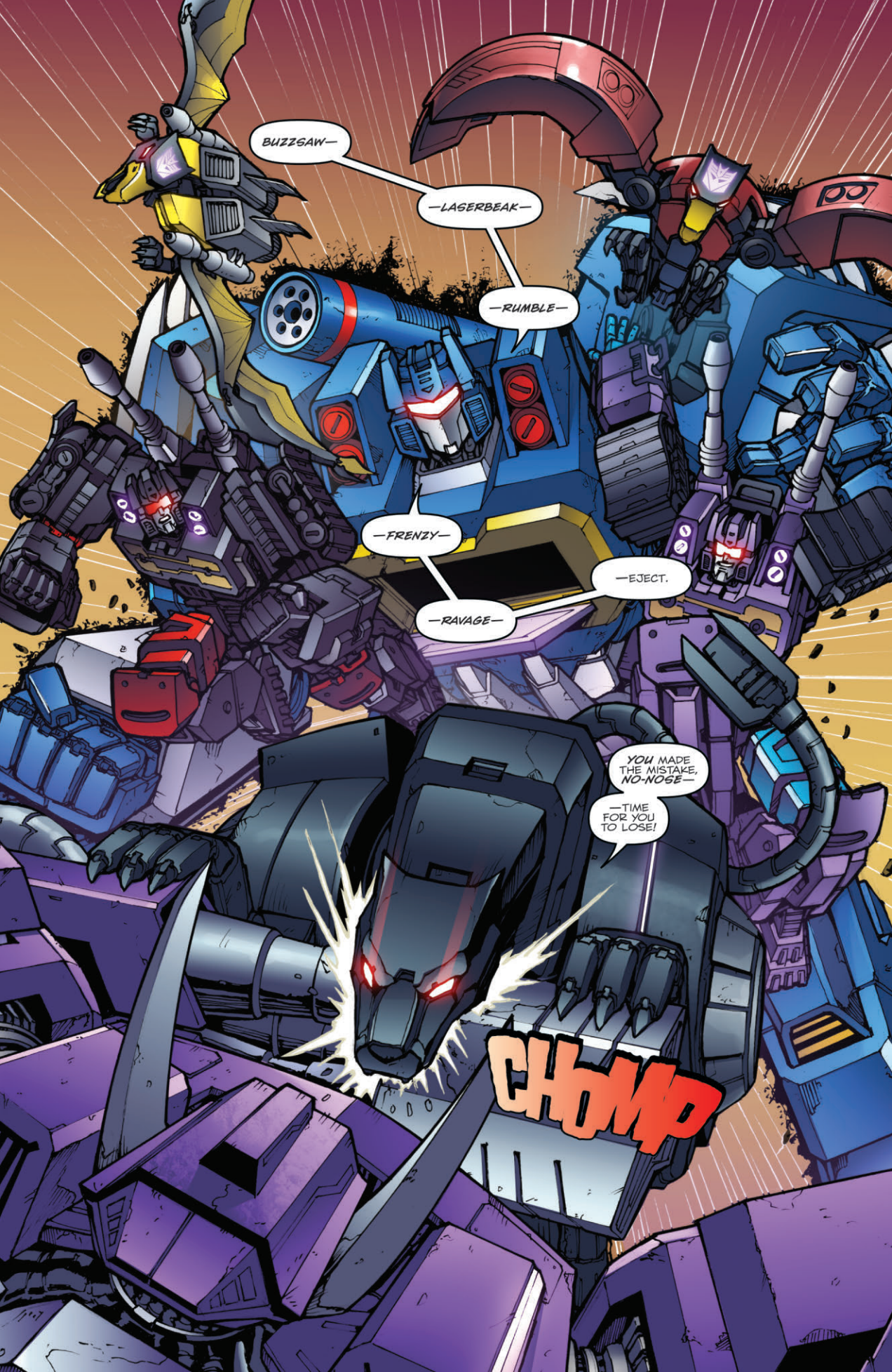

...BUT AT LEAST HE WAS *HONEST* ABOUT IT.
YOU DO NOT *UNDERSTAND* LOYALTY!
KRAMN


INDEED.
THERE... YOU *DO* HAVE SOME SENSE OF ME.

DREADWING'S *HOPELESS CONFRONTATION* WITH YOU CONFIRMED YOUR *CASSETTES* ARE ABSENT.
HOPELESS?
EVEN ALONE, I KNOW YOU CAPABLE OF OUTFIGHTING HIM...

...BUT NOT ME. *YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE COME ALONE,* SOUNDWAVE.
CHOOM


A DECEPTICON IS *NEVER ALONE.*

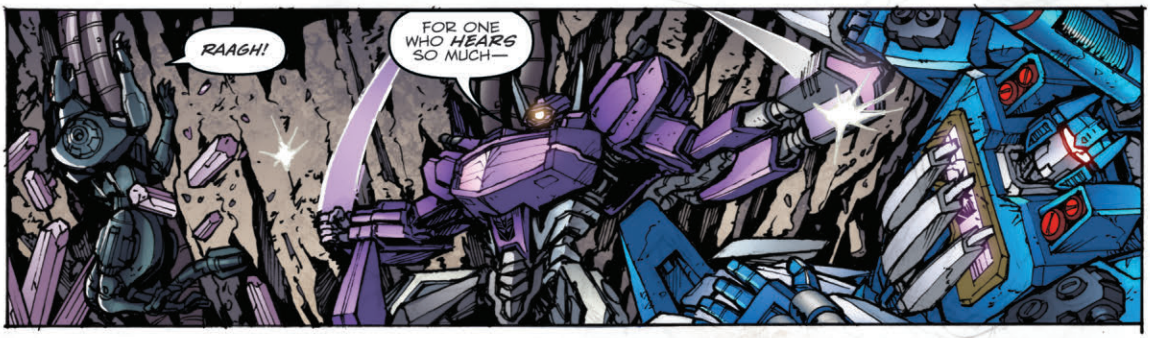

BUZZSAW—
—LASERBEAK—
—RUMBLE—
—FRENZY—
—RAVAGE—
—EJECT.
YOU MADE THE MISTAKE, NO-NOSE—
—TIME FOR YOU TO LOSE!
CHOMP

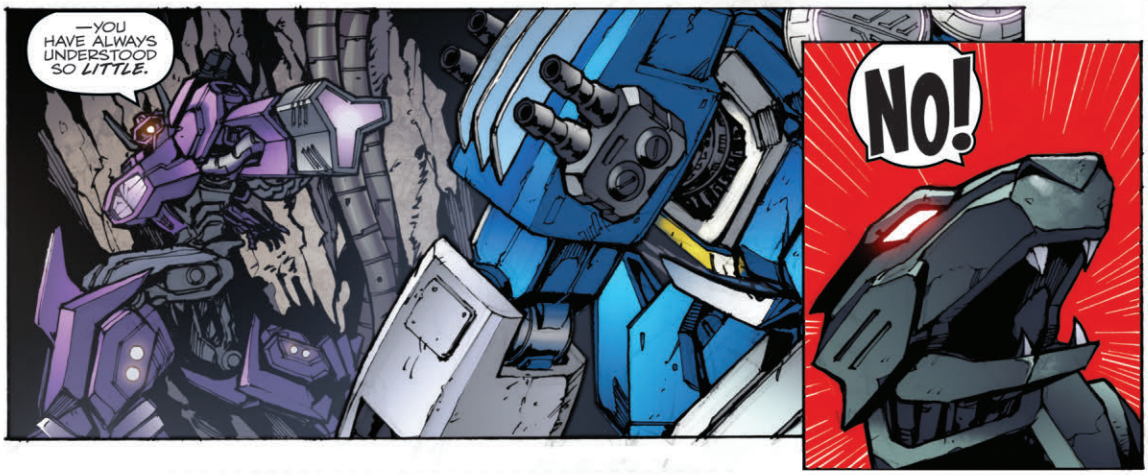
LOSING IS NOT AN OPTION, SOUNDWAVE.
ONE DAY HE WOULD IGNITE THE FLAME OF HOPE UNDER A POPULATION TERRORIZED AND TRAMPLED UPON.
BUT FIRST, MEGATRON NEEDED AN ALLY... AS DID I.
YOU ARE A THORN IN THE SIDE OF SENATOR PROTEUS' GOVERNMENT, MEGATRON.
NOT ENOUGH OF ONE. THEY IGNORE US.
YOU KNOW MY EMPLOYER SEES POSSIBILITIES.
YOUR SENATOR RATBAT DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE CAUSE. HE THINKS WE CAN BE... BARTERED.
HE SENDS YOU, HIS SERVANT—
I AM NO ONE'S SERVANT.
...
I STAND CORRECTED, SOUNDWAVE. NOW THAT YOU HAVE... PULLED YOURSELF TOGETHER, YOUR PRIDE—
YOU MISUNDERSTAND.
I LISTEN. I HEAR EVERYTHING.
EVERY TRANSMISSION, EVERY VOCALIZATION, EVERY FLASH OF LIGHT, EVERY HOLOGRAM.
I HEAR IT ALL. AND NOW THAT I AM ABLE TO... FOCUS MY ATTENTION... I KNOW HOW TO USE THE SENATOR TO FURTHER YOUR CAUSE.

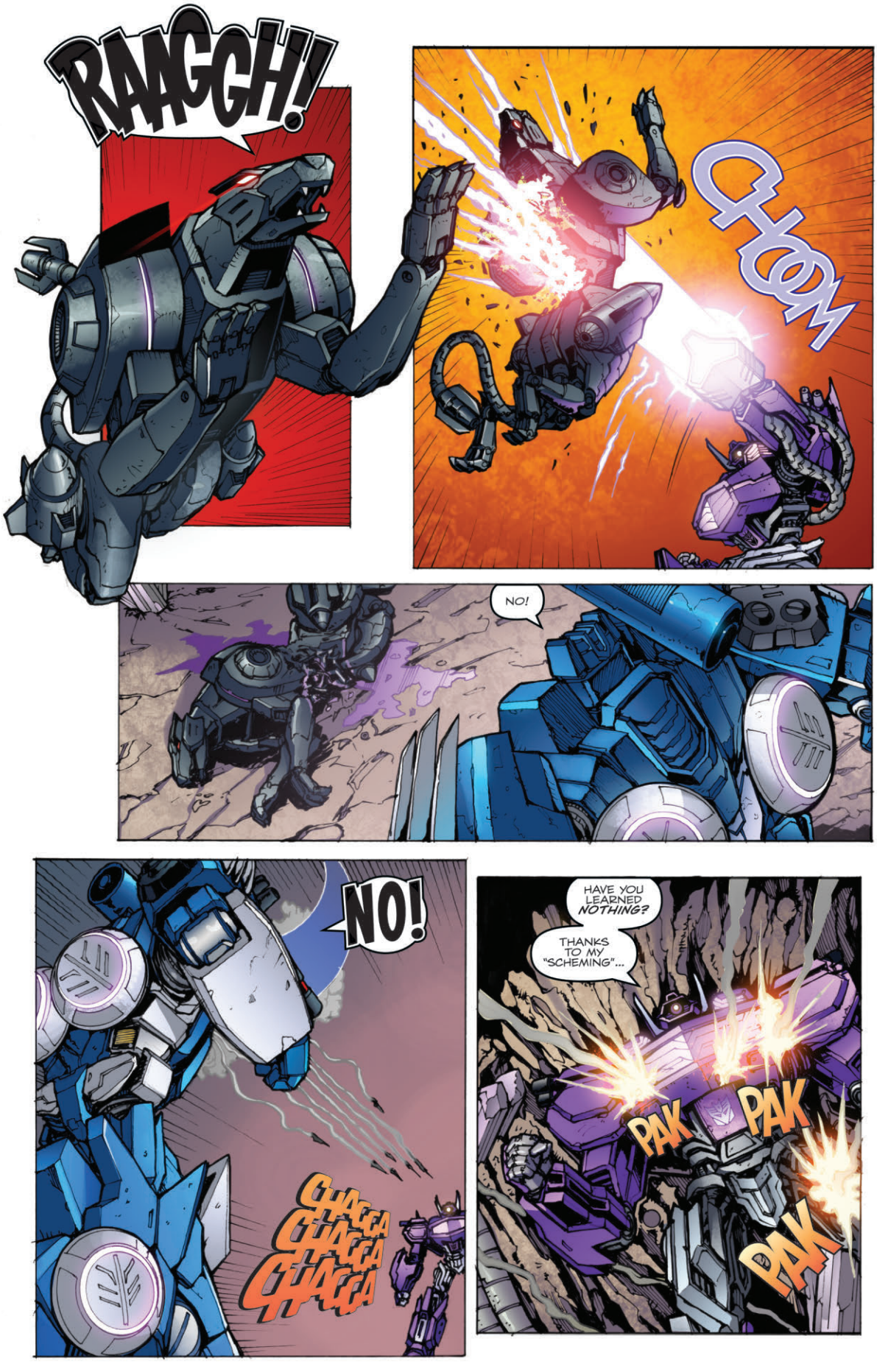
IF THE STAKES WERE HIGH ENOUGH, SENATOR RATBAT WOULD CALL AN EMERGENCY ASSEMBLY OF THE CYBERTRONIAN SENATE HERE, IN KAON—IN HIS DISTRICT.
ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE CAPTURED.
AND WHAT STAKES COULD BE THAT HIGH?
MYSELF? HA.
WHY WOULD THEY NOT SEND ME TO IACON?
FOR THAT MATTER—SENATOR PROTEUS' PUPPET PRIME, THE ONE CALLED SENTINEL.
WHY WOULD HE NOT MERELY PUT A BULLET IN MY SPARK?
NOT "YOU," MEGATRON...
..."YOU," THE DECEPTICONS.
ALL OF YOU. TOO MANY TO MOVE, AND TOO IMPORTANT TO IGNORE. THE SENATE WOULD CONVENE IN KAON, AND YOU COULD KILL THEM ALL.
I WOULD ELIMINATE ALL EVIDENCE OF WHO WAS THERE.
INDIVIDUALLY, YOUR DECEPTICONS WOULD REMAIN FREE...
...BUT EVERYONE WOULD KNOW THAT, AS A GROUP, THE DECEPTICONS ARE A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH.
YOU COULD REBUILD THE STATE—WITH EQUALITY FOR ALL.
THE WORLD WOULD BE YOURS, MEGATRON.
OURS, SOUNDWAVE.
THE WORLD SHALL BE OURS.
SOME QUESTION MY LOYALTY TO MEGATRON. NONSENSE. I WANTED TO GIVE HIM CYBERTRON...

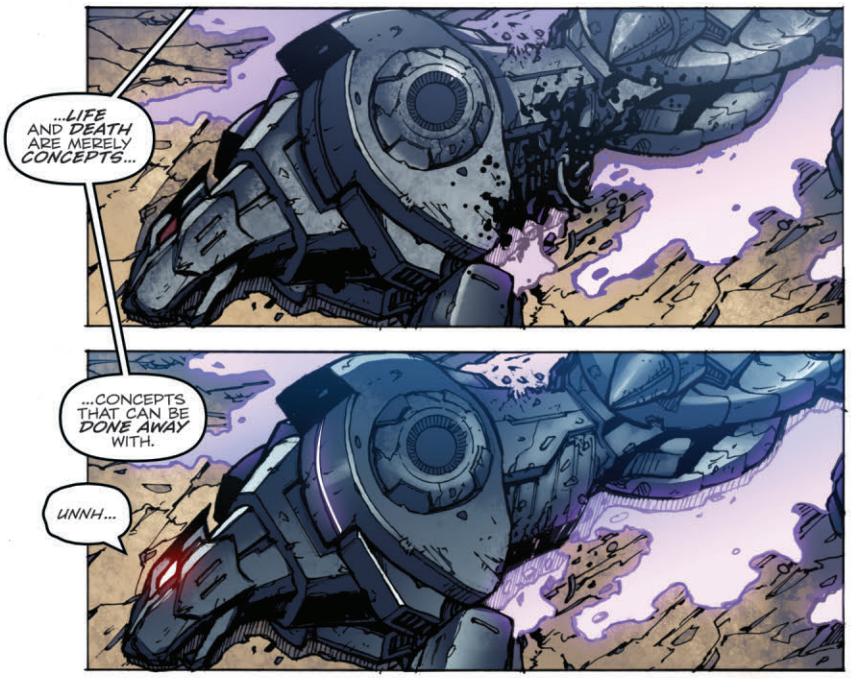
...BUT DESIRE IS NEVER ENOUGH TO DECIDE THE FATE OF A WORLD.
THIS WORLD BELONGS TO THE DECEPTICONS— NOT TO YOUR SCHEMING.
RAHRR
NNG.
CHOOM

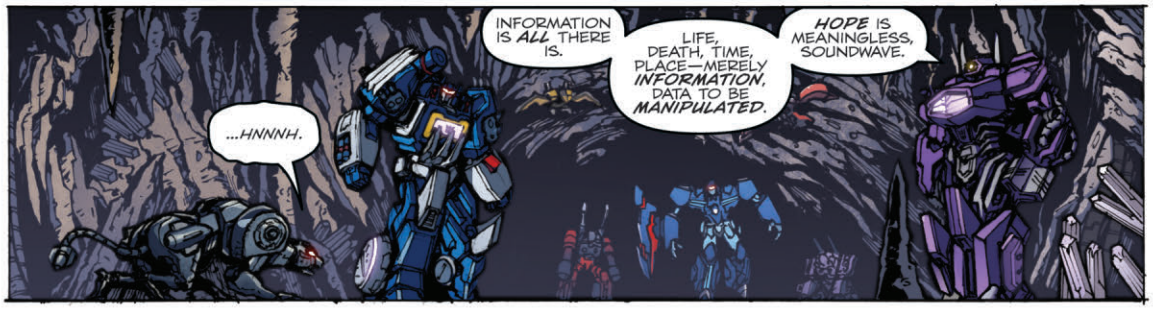
GOTCHA, YOU—
CHAK
AGGK!
SKAK


RAAGH!
FOR ONE WHO HEARS SO MUCH—


—YOU HAVE ALWAYS UNDERSTOOD SO LITTLE.
NO!

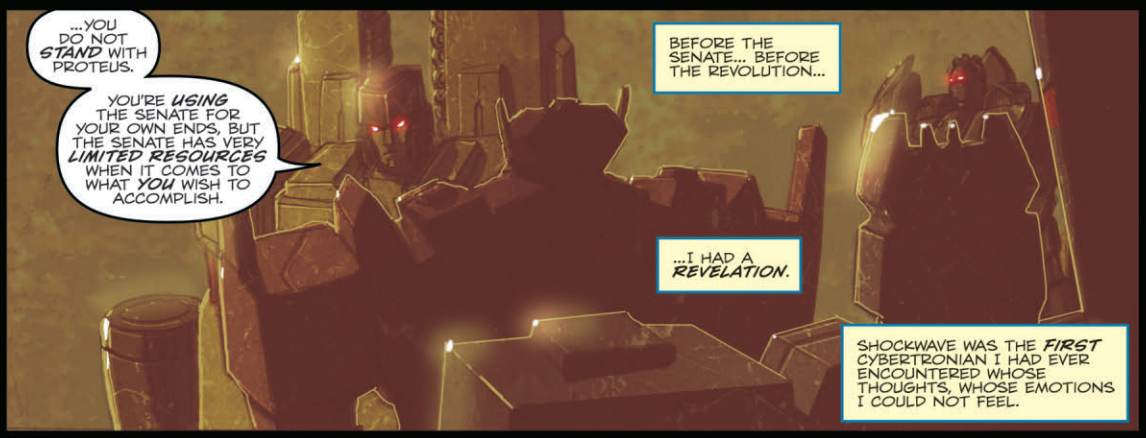

RAAGGH!
CHOOM
NO!
NO!
CHACCA CHACCA CHACCA
HAVE YOU LEARNED NOTHING?
THANKS TO MY "SCHEMING"...
PAK
PAK
PAK


...LIFE AND DEATH ARE MERELY CONCEPTS...
...CONCEPTS THAT CAN BE DONE AWAY WITH.
UNNH...

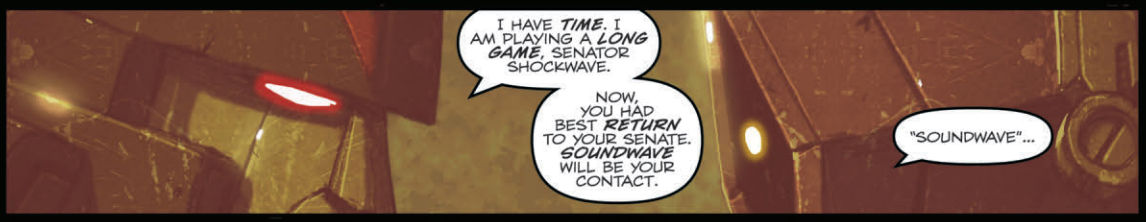

...HNNNH.
INFORMATION IS ALL THERE IS.
LIFE, DEATH, TIME, PLACE—MERELY INFORMATION, DATA TO BE MANIPULATED.
HOPE IS MEANINGLESS, SOUNDWAVE.

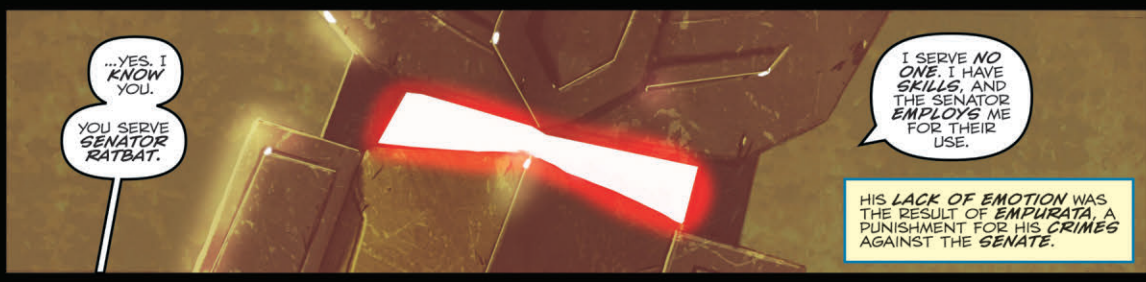
YOU WILL LIVE.
AND YOU WILL SEE THE POINT OF ALL THIS. I WILL SHOW YOU WHAT A PURITY OF INFORMATION WILL REVEAL.

I WILL SHOW YOU WHAT YOU STAND AGAINST.


...YOU DO NOT STAND WITH PROTEUS.
YOU'RE USING THE SENATE FOR YOUR OWN ENDS, BUT THE SENATE HAS VERY LIMITED RESOURCES WHEN IT COMES TO WHAT YOU WISH TO ACCOMPLISH.
BEFORE THE SENATE... BEFORE THE REVOLUTION...
...I HAD A REVELATION.
SHOCKWAVE WAS THE FIRST CYBERTRONIAN I HAD EVER ENCOUNTERED WHOSE THOUGHTS, WHOSE EMOTIONS I COULD NOT FEEL.

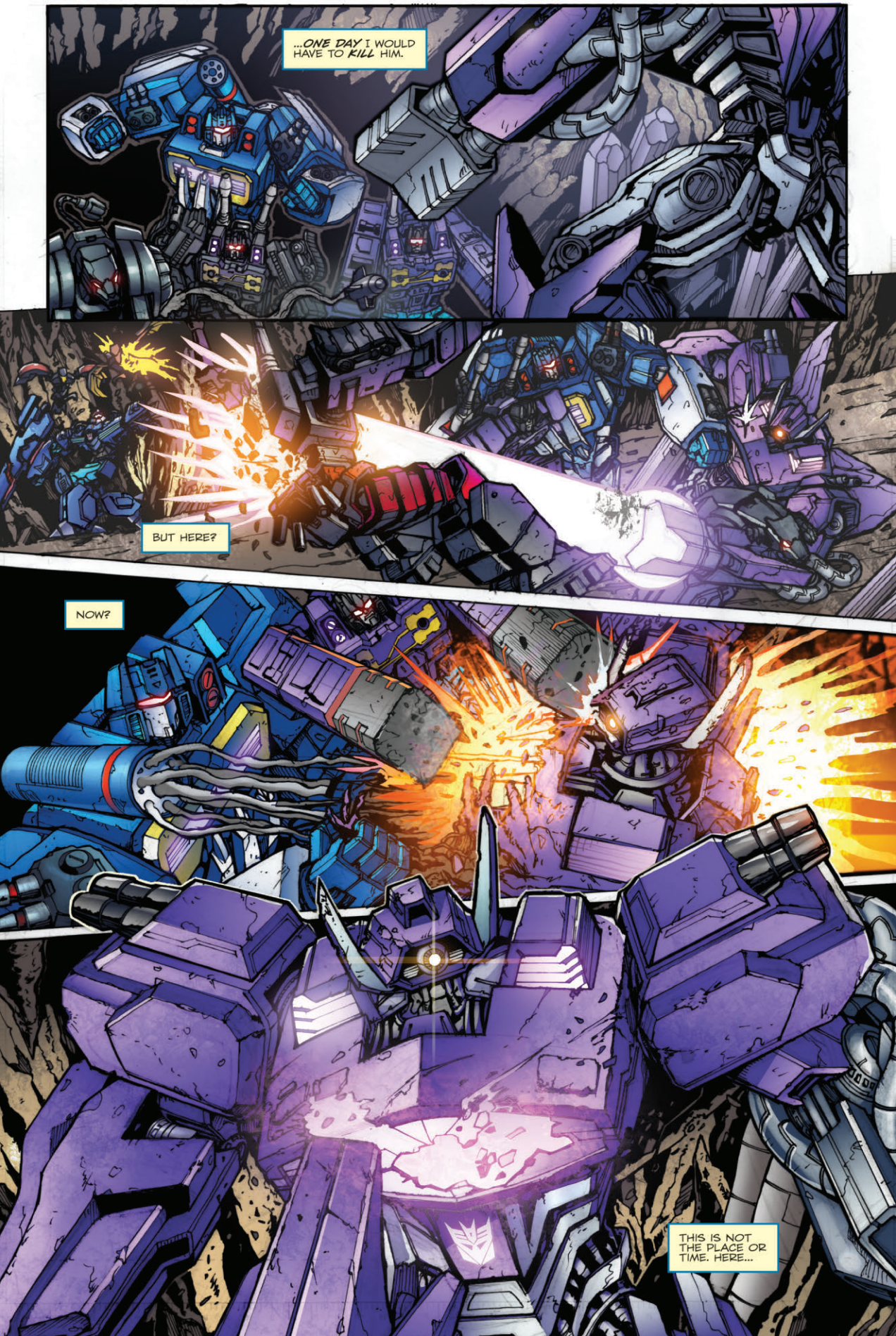
I HATED HIM IMMEDIATELY.
YOU STUDIED UNDER JHIAXUS.
I WANT A COMBINER. I WANT A COMBINER OF MY OWN, LIKE MONSTRUCTOR— EXCEPT CONTROLLABLE.
THAT... MAY TAKE A WHILE.


I HAVE TIME. I AM PLAYING A LONG GAME, SENATOR SHOCKWAVE.
NOW, YOU HAD BEST RETURN TO YOUR SENATE. SOUNDWAVE WILL BE YOUR CONTACT.
"SOUNDWAVE"...


...YES. I KNOW YOU.
YOU SERVE SENATOR RATBAT.
I SERVE NO ONE. I HAVE SKILLS, AND THE SENATOR EMPLOYS ME FOR THEIR USE.
HIS LACK OF EMOTION WAS THE RESULT OF EMPURATA, A PUNISHMENT FOR HIS CRIMES AGAINST THE SENATE.

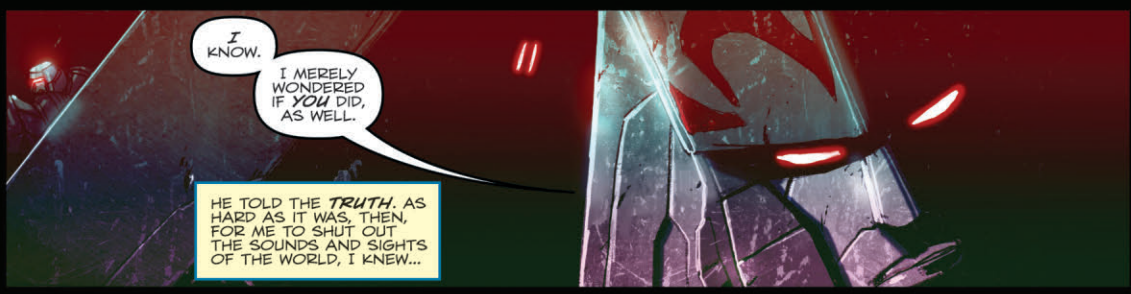
LIKE HIS FACE, HE WAS BLANK.
AH.
THEN I SHALL SEE YOU, SOUNDWAVE.
SHOCKWAVE WAS PERFECTION.

YOU ARE TROUBLED, MY FRIEND.
I DO NOT TRUST HIM.
I KNEW IMMEDIATELY...

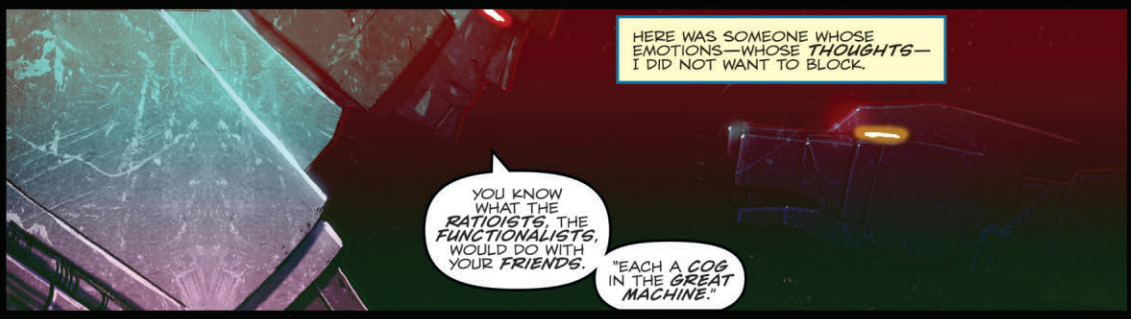

...ONE DAY I WOULD HAVE TO KILL HIM.
BUT HERE?
NOW?
THIS IS NOT THE PLACE OR TIME. HERE...

...JUSTICE IS BEYOND MY POWER.
IT IS POWER, MY FRIEND...
...YOUR MASTER SUPPLIES US WITH WEAPONS. HE PROFITS FROM THE CHAOS WE CAUSE...
...AND YET CYBERTRON IS DAMAGED IN THE PROCESS.
UNDER ORDERS OF MY EMPLOYER, SENATOR RATBAT, I HAD APPROACHED MEGATRON. RATBAT SAW AN OPPORTUNITY.
AND I DID NOT EXPECT TO BE IMPREGGED.
DOES THIS BOTHER YOU?
I... TRY...
...I TRY NOT TO LET IT.

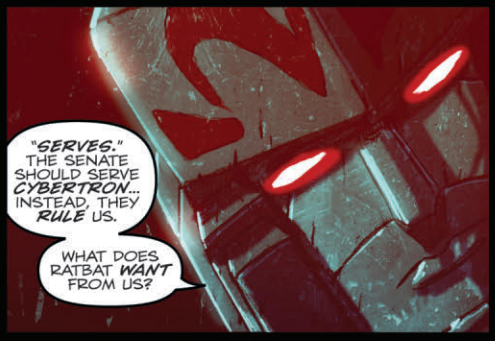
YOU SEEM DISTRACTED, AS ALWAYS. YOUR EMOTIONS GET IN THE WAY.
THEY... SOMETHING.
SOMETHING LIKE THAT. THEY... ARE NOT MY EMOTIONS.
AND YOUR... CREATURES HERE?
THESE ARE... THEY ARE FRIENDS. CYBERTRONIANS. NOT...
...CREATURES.


I KNOW.
I MERELY WONDERED IF YOU DID, AS WELL.
HE TOLD THE TRUTH. AS HARD AS IT WAS, THEN, FOR ME TO SHUT OUT THE SOUNDS AND SIGHTS OF THE WORLD, I KNEW...

...HERE WAS A CYBERTRONIAN WHO TOLD THE TRUTH.
THE SENSE... THE EMOTION... WAS UNLIKE ANYTHING I HAD EVER EXPERIENCED.
HE LOOKED AT RAVAGE, LASERBEAK, AND BUZZSAW— AND HE SAW BROTHERS. NOT SLAVES.


HERE WAS SOMEONE WHOSE EMOTIONS—WHOSE THOUGHTS— I DID NOT WANT TO BLOCK.
YOU KNOW WHAT THE RATIOISTS, THE FUNCTIONALISTS, WOULD DO WITH YOUR FRIENDS.
"EACH A COG IN THE GREAT MACHINE."

DECIMUS. HE... HE SAYS THAT. HE SERVES WITH MY EMPLOYER.

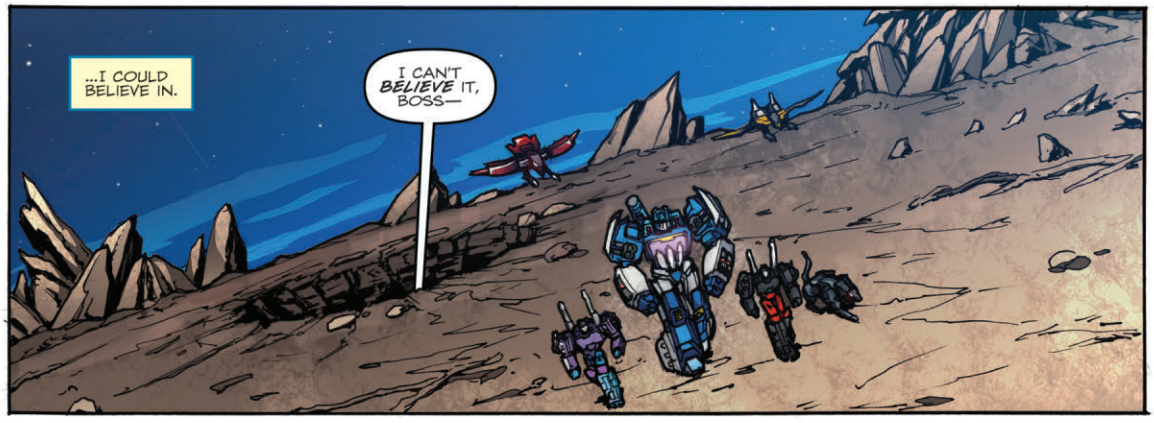

"SERVES." THE SENATE SHOULD SERVE CYBERTRON... INSTEAD, THEY RULE US.
WHAT DOES RATBAT WANT FROM US?

PROFIT. HE WANTS ONLY...
AND WHAT DO I WANT?
IT... IT IS NOT MY PLACE TO TELL YOU.
BUT YOU KNOW. YOU CAN READ MY SPARK AS IF IT WAS A DATAPAD. TELL ME WHAT I WANT—TELL ME MY DEEPEST DESIRE. YOU UNDERSTAND...

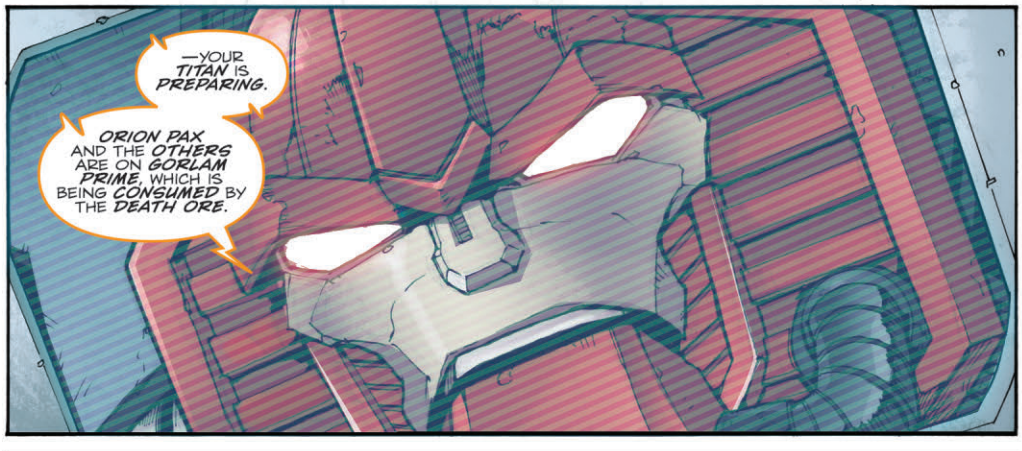
...I AM NOT A CREATURE OF VIOLENCE.

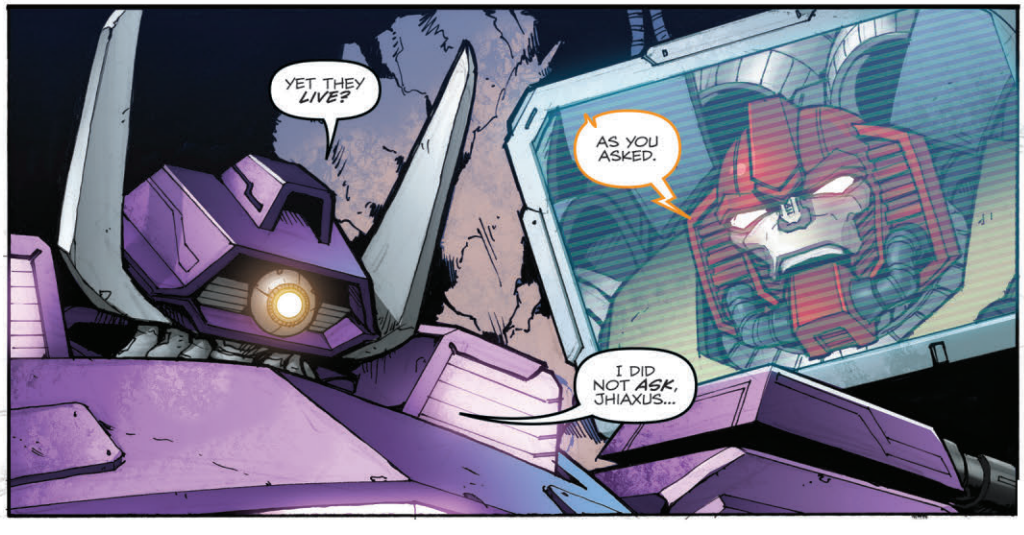
OF COURSE NOT... I NEVER...
SOMETIMES VIOLENCE IS THE ONLY RECOURSE. BUT IT IS A MEANS.
NEVER AN END.

EQUALITY.
YOU WANT ALL CYBERTRONIANS TO BE EQUAL.
IT WAS A CALMING SENSATION. SOMETHING I HOLD ON TO. SOMETHING...

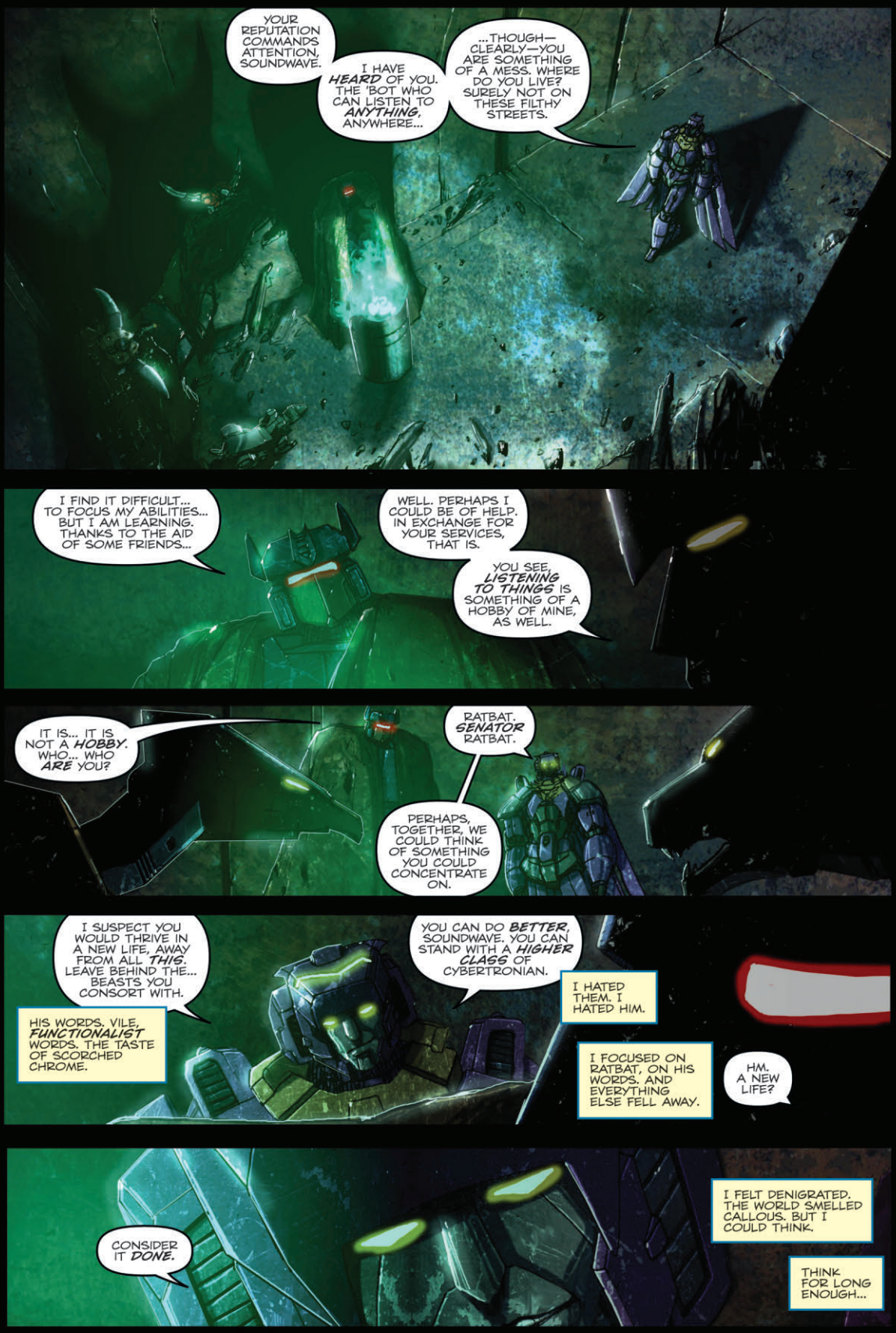

...I COULD BELIEVE IN.
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT, BOSS—

—YOU'RE LETTING THEM GO!
NONE CAN DIE HERE. THE ONLY POSSIBLE OUTCOME IS A STALEMATE.
THE LOGICAL COURSE IS TO AVOID DELAY.
JHIAXUS. HAS THE TIME ARRIVED?
INDEED—


—YOUR TITAN IS PREPARING.
ORION PAX AND THE OTHERS ARE ON GORLAM PRIME, WHICH IS BEING CONSUMED BY THE DEATH ORE.


YET THEY LIVE?
AS YOU ASKED.
I DID NOT ASK, JHIAXUS...

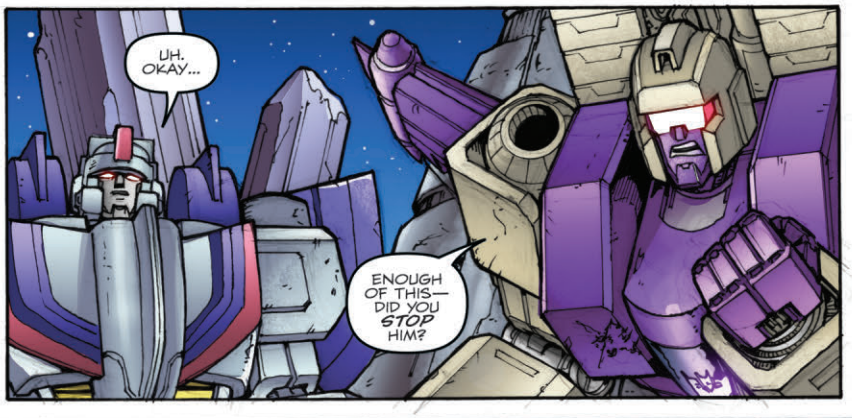
...I COMMANDED.

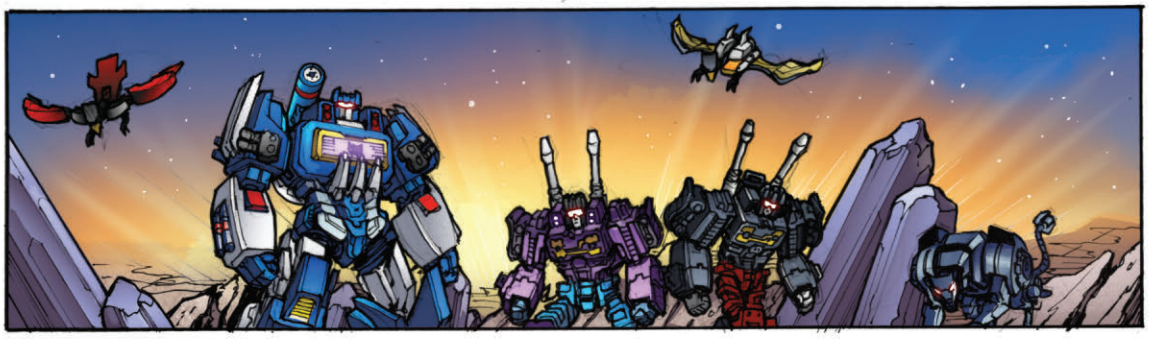

YOUR REPUTATION COMMANDS ATTENTION, SOUNDWAVE.
I HAVE HEARD OF YOU. THE 'BOT WHO CAN LISTEN TO ANYTHING, ANYWHERE...
...THOUGH—CLEARLY—YOU ARE SOMETHING OF A MESS. WHERE DO YOU LIVE? SURELY NOT ON THESE FILTHY STREETS.
I FIND IT DIFFICULT... TO FOCUS MY ABILITIES... BUT I AM LEARNING. THANKS TO THE AID OF SOME FRIENDS...
WELL. PERHAPS I COULD BE OF HELP. IN EXCHANGE FOR YOUR SERVICES, THAT IS.
YOU SEE, LISTENING TO THINGS IS SOMETHING OF A HOBBY OF MINE, AS WELL.
IT IS... IT IS NOT A HOBBY. WHO... WHO ARE YOU?
RATBAT. SENATOR RATBAT.
PERHAPS, TOGETHER, WE COULD THINK OF SOMETHING YOU COULD CONCENTRATE ON.
I SUSPECT YOU WOULD THRIVE IN A NEW LIFE, AWAY FROM ALL THIS. LEAVE BEHIND THE... BEASTS YOU CONSORT WITH.
HIS WORDS. VILE, FUNCTIONALIST WORDS. THE TASTE OF SCORCHED CHROME.
YOU CAN DO BETTER, SOUNDWAVE. YOU CAN STAND WITH A HIGHER CLASS OF CYBERTRONIAN.
I HATED THEM. I HATED HIM.
I FOCUSED ON RATBAT, ON HIS WORDS, AND EVERYTHING ELSE FELL AWAY.
HM. A NEW LIFE?
CONSIDER IT DONE.
I FELT DENIGRATED. THE WORLD SMELLED CALLOUS. BUT I COULD THINK.
THINK FOR LONG ENOUGH...

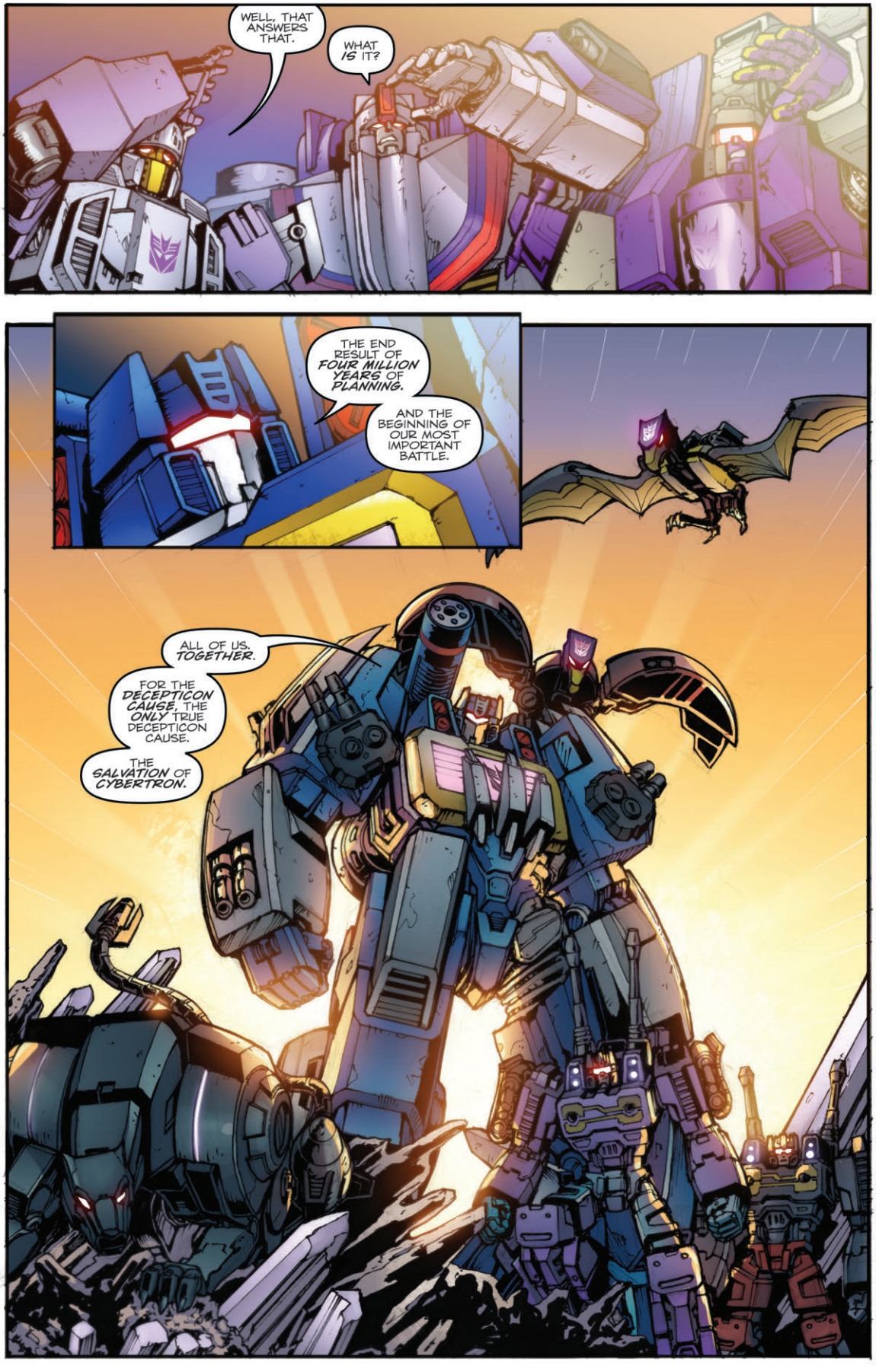
...TO GET WHERE I NEEDED TO BE.
TO MY BROTHERS.

BROTHERHOOD HOLDS ME TOGETHER. THE BROTHERHOOD OF DECEPTICONS.
WHAT *HAPPENED?*

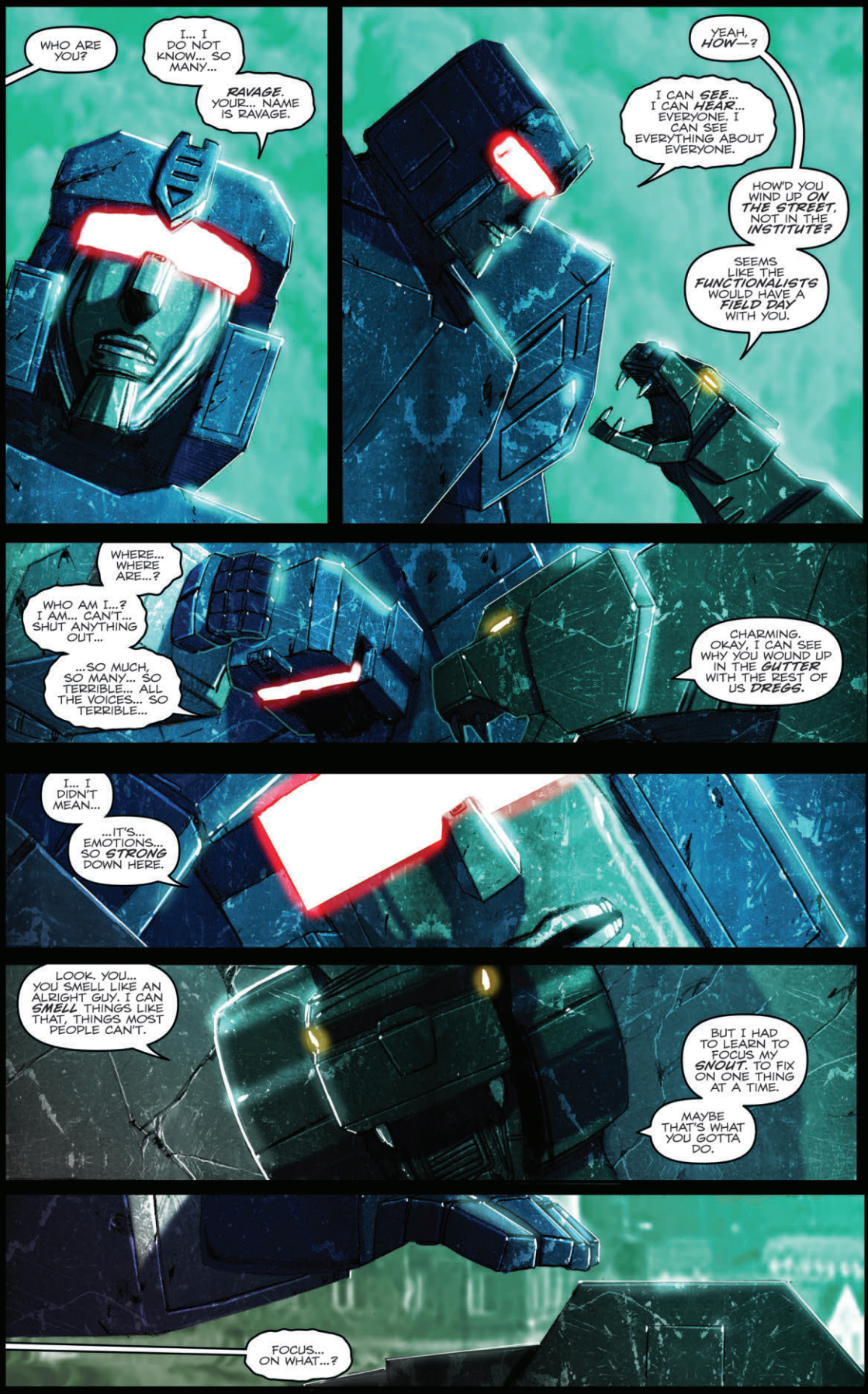
I SAW THE PURSUIT OF INFORMATION WITHOUT LIMIT, AND FOUND IT *WANTING*.
A LESSON I HAD LEARNED LONG AGO.


UH. OKAY...
ENOUGH OF THIS— DID YOU *STOP* HIM?




WELL, THAT ANSWERS THAT.
WHAT *IS* IT?
THE END RESULT OF *FOUR MILLION YEARS* OF *PLANNING.*
AND THE BEGINNING OF OUR MOST IMPORTANT BATTLE.
ALL OF US. *TOGETHER.*
FOR THE *DECEPTICON CAUSE*, THE *ONLY* TRUE DECEPTICON CAUSE.
THE *SALVATION* OF *CYBERTRON.*

SO I SAID, "CYBERTRON'S SALVATION? YEAH, RIGHT.
"YOU WANT THE ENERGON, SENATOR—GET IT YOURSELF. I'M NOT GOING BACK IN THERE, NOT TODAY."
NO YOU DIDN'T.
THE COUNCIL WOULD HAVE YOUR SPARK EXTRACTED.
BIRDS. NEVER TELL A STORY TO A BIRD.
THE POINT ISN'T WHETHER OR NOT IT HAPPENED, BUZZSAW. THE POINT IS—
SNIFF SNIFF
—HOLD UP.
WHAT DO YOU SMELL? POLICE?
NO. I SMELL FEAR.
ARE YOU OKAY?
SOUNDS. LIGHTS. TASTES. SMELLS. EVERYWHERE.
SO MANY...


WHO ARE YOU?
I... I DO NOT KNOW... SO MANY...
RAVAGE. YOUR... NAME IS RAVAGE.
YEAH, HOW—?
I CAN SEE... I CAN HEAR... EVERYONE. I CAN SEE EVERYTHING ABOUT EVERYONE.
HOW'D YOU WIND UP ON THE STREET, NOT IN THE INSTITUTE?
SEEMS LIKE THE FUNCTIONALISTS WOULD HAVE A FIELD DAY WITH YOU.
WHERE... WHERE ARE...?
WHO AM I...? I AM... CAN'T... SHUT ANYTHING OUT...
...SO MUCH, SO MANY... SO TERRIBLE... ALL THE VOICES... SO TERRIBLE...
CHARMING. OKAY, I CAN SEE WHY YOU WOUND UP IN THE GUTTER WITH THE REST OF US DREGS.
I... I DIDN'T MEAN...
...IT'S... EMOTIONS... SO STRONG DOWN HERE.
LOOK. YOU... YOU SMELL LIKE AN ALRIGHT GUY. I CAN SMELL THINGS LIKE THAT, THINGS MOST PEOPLE CAN'T.
BUT I HAD TO LEARN TO FOCUS MY SNOUT. TO FIX ON ONE THING AT A TIME.
MAYBE THAT'S WHAT YOU GOTTA DO.
FOCUS... ON WHAT...?

THE STORY CONTINUES IN DARK CYBERTRON VOL. 1

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# DARK DAWN!

The battle for control of Cybertron ends—and a new world order emerges! Exiled in the mechanical wilderness, Bumblebee and the Autobots wrestle with their fate—while the emotionless Shockwave enacts a plan millions of years in the making! The puzzle pieces come together, revealing the origin of Shockwave and the death of a world!

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